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THE

PILOT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LIONEL LINCOLN," "SPY," &c

[James Fenimore Cooper]

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE PILOT.

CHAPTER I.

"Sullen waves, incessant rolling,
Rudely dash against her sides."

Song.

A SINGLE glance at the map will make the reader acquainted with the position of the eastern coast of the island of Great Britain, as connected with the shores of the opposite continent. Together they form the boundaries of the small sea that has for ages been known to the world as the scene of maritime exploits, and as the great avenue through which commerce and war have conducted the fleets of the northern

nations of Europe. Over this sea the islanders long asserted a jurisdiction, exceeding that which reason concedes to any power on the highway of nations, and which frequently led to conflicts that caused an expenditure of blood and treasure, utterly disproportioned to the advantages that can ever arise from the maintenance of a useless and abstract right. It is across the waters of this disputed ocean that we shall attempt to conduct our readers, selecting a period for our incidents that has peculiar interests for every American, not only because it was the birth-day of his nation, but because it was also the era when reason and common sense began to take place of custom and feudal practices in the management of the affairs of nations.

Soon after the events of the Revolution had involved the kingdoms of France and Spain, and the republics of Holland, in our quarrel, a group of labourers was collected in a field that lay exposed to the winds of the ocean, on the north-eastern coast of England. These men were lightening their toil, and cheering the gloom of a day in December, by uttering their crude opinions on the political aspects of the times. The fact that England was engaged in a war with some of her dependencies on the other side of the Atlantic, had long been known to them, after the manner that faint rumours of distant and uninteresting events gain on

the ear; but now that nations, with whom she had been used to battle, were armed against her in the quarrel, the din of war had disturbed the quiet even of these secluded and illiterate rustics. The principal speakers, on the occasion, were a Scotch drover, who was waiting the leisure of the occupant of the fields, and an Irish labourer, who had found his way across the channel, and thus far over the island, in quest of employment.

"The nagurs wouldn't have been a job at all for ould England, letting alone Ireland," said the latter, "if these French and Spanishers hadn't been troubling themselves in the matter. I'm sure it's but little reason I have for thanking them, if a man is to keep as sober as a priest at mass, for fear he should find himself a souldier, and he knowing nothing about the same."

"Hoot, man! ye ken but little of raising an airmy in Ireland, if ye mak' a drum o' a whiskey keg," said the drover, winking to the listeners. "Noo, in the north, they ca' a gathering of the folk, and follow the pipes as graciously as ye wad journey kirkward o' a Sabbath morn. I've seen a' the names o' a hieland raj'ment on a sma' bit paper, that ye might cover wi' a leddy's hand. They were a' Camerons and M'Donalds, though they paraded sax hundred men!

But what ha'e ye gotten here! That chield has an ow'r liking to the land for a seafaring body; an' if the bottom o' the sea be ony thing like the top o't, he's in great danger o' a shipwrack!"

This unexpected change in the discourse drew all eyes on the object towards which the staff of the observant drover was pointed. To the utter amazement of every individual present, a small vessel was seen moving slowly round a point of land that formed one of the sides of the little bay, to which the field the labourers were in composed the other. There was something very peculiar in the externals of this unusual visitor, which added in no small degree to the surprise created by her appearance in that retired place. None but the smallest vessels, and those rarely, or, at long intervals, a desperate smuggler, were ever known to venture so close to the land, amid the sandbars and sunken rocks with which that immediate coast abounded. The adventurous mariners who now attempted this dangerous navigation in so wanton, and, apparently, so heedless a manner, were in a low, black schooner, whose hull seemed utterly disproportioned to the raking masts it upheld; which, in their turn, supported a lighter set of spars, that tapered away until their upper extremities appeared no larger than the lazy pendant that

in vain endeavoured to display its length in the light breeze. The short day of that high northern latitude was already drawing to a close, and the sun was throwing his parting rays obliquely across the waters, touching the gloomy waves here and there with streaks of pale light. The stormy wind of the German ocean were apparently lulled to rest; and though the incessant rolling of the surge on the shore heightened the gloomy character of the hour and the view, the light ripple that ruffled the sleeping billows was produced by a gentle air, that blew directly from the land. Notwithstanding this favourable circumstance, there was something threatening in the aspect of the ocean, which was speaking in hollow, but deep murmurs like a volcano on the eve of an irruption, that gradually heightened the feelings of amazement and dread, with which the peasants beheld this extraordinary interruption in the quiet of their little bay. With no other sails spread to the action of the air than her heavy mainsail, and one of those light jibs that projected far beyond her bows, the vessel glided over the water with a grace and facility that seemed magical to the beholders, who turned their wondering looks from the schooner to each other, in silent amazement, At length the drover spoke in a low, solemn voice—

"He's a bold chield that steers her! and if that bit craft has wood in her bottom, like the brigantines that ply

between Lon'on and the firth at Leith, he's in mair danger than a prudent man could wish. Ay! he's by the big rock that shows his head when the tide runs low, but it's no mortal man who can steer long in the road he's journeying, and not speedily find land wi' water a-top o't."

The little schooner, however, still held her way among the rocks and sand-pits, making such slight deviations in her course, as proved her to be under the direction of one who knew his danger, until she had entered as far into the bay as prudence could at all justify, when her canvass was gathered into folds, seemingly without the agency of hands, and the vessel after rolling for a few minutes on the long billows that hove in from the ocean, swung round in the currents of the tide, and was held by her anchor.

The peasants now began to make their conjectures more freely concerning the character and object of their visitor; some intimating that she was engaged in contraband trade, and others that her views were hostile, and her business war. A few dark hints were hazarded on the materiality of her construction, for nothing of artificial formation, it was urged, would be ventured by men in such a dangerous place at a time when even the most inexperienced landsman was enabled to foretell the certain gale. The Scotchman, who

to all the sagacity of his countrymen, added no small portion of their superstition, leaned greatly to the latter conclusion, and had begun to express this sentimennt warily and with reverence, when the child of Erin, who appeared not to possess any very definite ideas on the subject, interrupted him, by exclaiming—

"Faith! there's two of them! a big and a little! sure the bogles of the saa likes good company the same as any other Christians!"

"Twa!" echoed the drover; "twa! ill luck bides o' some o' ye. Twa craft a-sailing without hand to guide them, in sic a place as this, whare eyesight is no guid enough to show the dangers, bodes evil to a' that luik thereon. Hoot! she's na yearling the tither! Luik, man! luik! she's a gallant boat, and a great;" he paused, raised his pack from the ground, and first giving one searching look at the objects of his suspicions, he nodded with sagacity to the listeners, and continued, as he moved slowly towards the interior of the country, "I should na wonder if she carried King George's commission about her; 'weel, 'weel, I will journey upward to the town, and ha'e a crack wi' the guid man, for thae craft ha'e a suspeecious aspect, and the sma' bit thing would nab a man quite easy, and the big ane would hold us a' and no feel we war in her."

This sagacious warning caused a general movement in the party, for the intellignnce of a hot press was among the rumours of the times. The husbandmen collected their implements of labour, and retired homewards; and, though many a curious eye was bent on the movements of the vessels from the distant hills but very few of those not immediately interested in the mysterious visitors ventured to approach the little rocky cliffs that lined the bay.

The vessel that occasioned these cautious movements was a gallant ship, whose huge hull, lofty masts, and square yards, loomed in the evening's haze, above the sea, like a distant mountain rising from the deep. She carried but little sail, and though she warily avoided the near approach to the land that the schooner had attempted, the similarity of their movement was sufficiently apparent to warrant the conjecture that they were employed on the same duty. The frigate, for the ship belonged to this class of vessels, floated across the entrance of the little bay majestically in the tide, with barely enough motion through the water to govern her movements until she arrived opposite to the place where her consort lay, when she hove up heavily into the wind, squared the enormous yards on her mainmast, and attempting, in counteracting the power of her sails by each other, to remain stationary; but the

light air, that had at no time swelled her heavy canvass to the utmost, began to fail, and the long waves that rolled in from the ocean, ceased to be ruffled with the breeze from the land. The currents and the billows were fast sweeping the frigate towards one of the points of the estuary, where the black heads of the rocks could be seen running far into the sea, and, in their turn, the mariners of the ship dropped an anchor to the bottom and drew her sails in festoons to the yards. As the vessels swung round to the tide, a heavy ensign was raised to her peak, and a current of air opening for a moment its folds, the white field and red cross, that distinguished the flag of England, were displayed to view. So much, even the wary drover had loitered at a distance to behold; but when a boat was launched from either vessel, he quickened his steps, observing to his wondering and amused companions, that "they craft were a' thegither mair bonny to luik on than to abide wi'."

A numerous crew manned the barge that was lowered from the frigate, which, after receiving an officer, with an attendant youth, left the ship, and moved with a measured stroke of its oars, directly towards the head of the bay. As it passed at a short distance from the schooner, a light whale-boat, pulled by four athletic men, shot from her side, and rather dancing over than cutting through the waves,

crossed her course with a wonderful velocity. As the boats approached each other, the men in obedience to signals from their officers suspended their efforts, and for a few minutes they floated at rest during which time there was the following dialogue.

"Is the old man mad!" exclaimed the young officer in the whale-boat, when his men had ceased rowing; "does he think that the bottom of the Ariel is made of iron, and that a rock can't knock a hole in it! or does he think she is manned with alligators, who can't be drowned!"

A languid smile played for a moment round the handsome features of the young man, who was rather reclining than sitting in the stern sheets of the barge as he replied,

"He knows your prudence two well, Captain Barnstable to fear either the wreck of your vessel, or the drowning of her crew. How near the bottom does your keel lie?"

"I am afraid to sound," returned Barnstable. "I have never the heart to touch a lead line when I see the rocks coming up to breathe like so many porpoises,"

"You are afloat!" exclaimed the other, with a vehemence that denoted an abundance of latent fire.

"Afloat!" echoed his friend; "aye! the little Ariel would float in air!" As he spoke, he rose in the boat, and lifting his leather sea-cap from his head, stroked back the thick clusters of black locks which shadowed his sun-burnt countenance, while he viewed his little vessel with the complacency of a seaman who was proud of her qualities. "But it's close work Mr. Griffith, when a man rides to a single anchor in a place like this, and such a nightfall. What are the orders?"

"I shall pull into the surf and let go a grapnel; you will take Mr. Merry into your whale-boat, and try to drive her through the breakers on the beach."

"Beach!" retorted Barnstable; "do you call a perpendicular rock of a hundred feet in height a beach!",

"We shall not dispute about terms," said Griffith, smiling; "but you must manage to get on the shore; we have seen the signal from the land, and know that the pilot, whom we have so long expected is ready to come off."

Barnstable shook his head with a grave air, as he muttered to himself, "this is droll navigation; first we run into an unfrequented bay that is full of rocks, and sand-pits, and

shoals, and then we get off our pilot. But how am I to know him?"

"Merry will give you the pass-word, and tell you where to look for him. I would land myself, but my orders forbid it. If you meet with difficulties, show three oar-blades in a row, and I will pull in to your assistance. Three oars on end, and a pistol, will bring the fire of my muskets, and the signal repeated from the barge will draw a shot from the ship."

"I thank you, I thank you," said Barnstable carelessly; "I believe I can fight my own battles against all the enemies we are likely to fall in with on this coast. But the old man is surely mad. I would—"

"You would obey his orders if he were here, and you will now please to obey mine," said Griffith, in a tone that the friendly expression of his eye contradicted. "Pull in, and keep a look out for a small man in a drab pee-jacket; Merry will give you the word; if he answer it, bring him off to the barge."

The young men now nodded familiarly and kindly to each other, and the boy, who was called Mr. Merry, having

changed his place from the barge to the whale-boat, Barnstable threw himself into a seat, and making a signal with his hand, his men again bent to their oars. The light vessel shot away from her companion, and dashed in boldly towards the rocks; after skirting the shore for some distance in quest of a favourable place, she was suddenly turned, and, dashing over the broken waves, was run upon a spot where a landing could be effected in safety.

In the mean time the barge followed these movements, at some distance, with a more measured progress, and when the whale-boat was observed to be drawn up alongside of a rock, the promised grapnel was cast into the water, and her crew deliberately proceeded to get their firearms in a state for immediate service. Every thing appeared to be done in obedience to strict orders, that must have been previously communicated; for the young man, who has been introduced to the reader by the name of Griffith, seldom spoke, and then only in the pithy expressions that are apt to fall from those who are sure of obedience. When the boat had brought up to her grapnel, he sunk back at his length on the cushioned seats of the barge, and drawing his hat over his eyes in a listless manner, he continued for many minutes apparently absorbed in thoughts altogether foreign to his present situation. Occasionally he rose, and would first

bend his looks in quest of his companions on the shore, and then, turning his expressive eyes towards the ocean, the abstracted and vacant air that so often usurped the place of animation and intelligence in his countenance, would give place to the anxious and intelligent look of a seaman gifted with an experience beyond his years. His weather-beaten and hardy crew, having made their dispositions for offence, sat in profound silence, with their heads thrust into the bosoms of their jackets, but with their eyes earnestly regarding every cloud that was gathering in the threatening atmosphere, and exchanging looks of deep care, whenever the boat rose higher than usual on one of those long, heavy ground-swells, that were heaving in from the ocean with increasing rapidity and magnitude.

CHAPTER II.

——— "A horseman's coat shall hide
Thy taper shape and comeliness of side;
And, with a bolder stride and looser air,
Mingled with men, a man thou must appear."

Prior.

When the whale-boat obtained the position we have described, the young lieutenant, who, in consequence of commanding a schooner, was usually addressed by the title of captain, stepped on the rocks, followed by the youthful midshipman, who had quitted the barge, to aid in the hazardous duty of their expedition.

"This is, at best but a Jacob's ladder we have to climb," said Barnstable, casting his eyes upwards at the difficult ascent, "and it's by no means certain that we shall be well received, when we get up, though we should even reach the top."

"We are under the guns of the frigate," returned the boy; "and you remember, sir, three oar blades and a pistol, repeated from the barge, will draw her fire."

"Yes, on our own heads. Boy, never be so foolish as to trust a long shot. It makes a great smoke and some noise, but it's a terrible uncertain manner of throwing old iron about. In such a business as this, I would sooner trust Tom Coffin and his harpoon to back me, than the best broadside that ever rattled out of the three decks of a ninety gun ship. Come, gather your limbs together, and try if you can walk on terra firma, Master Coffin."

The seaman who was addressed by this dire appellation, arose slowly from the place where he was stationed as cockswain of the boat, and seemed to ascend high in the air by the gradual evolution of numberless folds in his body. When erect, he stood nearly six feet and as many inches in his shoes, though, when elevated in his most perpendicular attitude, there was a forward inclination about his head and shoulders, that appeared to be the consequence of habitual confinement in limited lodgings. His whole frame was destitute of the rounded outlines of a well-formed man, though his enormous hands furnished a display of bones and sinews which gave indications of gigantic strength. On his

head he wore a little, low, brown hat of wool, with an arched top, that threw an expression of peculiar solemnity and hardness over his harsh visage, the sharp, prominent features of which, were completely encircled by a set of black whiskers, that began to be grizzled a little with age. One of his hands grasped, with a sort of instinct, the staff of a bright harpoon, the lower end of which he placed firmly on the rock, as, in obedience to the order of his commander he left the place, where, considering his vast dimensions, he had been established in an incredibly small space.

As soon as Captain Barnstable received this addition to his strength, he gave a few precautionary orders to the men in the boat, and proceeded to the difficult task of ascending the rocks. Notwithstanding the great daring and personal agility of Barnstable, he would have been completely baffled in this attempt, but for the assistance he occasionally received from his cockswain, whose prodigious strength, and great length of limbs, enabled him to make exertions which it would have been useless for most men to attempt. When within a few feet of the summit, they availed themselves of a projecting rock, to pause for consultation and breath ; both of which seemed necessary for their further movements.

" This will be but a bad place for a retreat, if we should happen to fall in with enemies," said Barnstable. " Where

are we to look for this pilot, Mr. Merry, or how are we to know him; and what certainty have you that he will not betray us?"

"The question you are to put to him is written on this bit of paper," returned the boy, as he handed the other the word of recognition; "we made the signal on the point of the rock at yon headland, but as he must have seen our boat, he will follow us to this place. As to his betraying us, he seemed to have the confidence of Captain Munson, who has kept a bright look-out for him ever since we made the land."

"Ay," muttered the lieutenant, "and I shall have a bright look-out kept on him, now we are on the land. I like not this business of hugging the shore so closely, nor have I much faith in any traitor. What think you of it, Master Coffin?"

The hardy old seaman, thus addressed, turned his grave visage on his commander, and replied with a becoming gravity—

"Give me plenty of sea-room, and good canvass, where there is no occasion for pilots at all, sir. For my part I was born on board of a chebacco-man, and never could see the

use of more land than now and then a small island, to raise a few vegetables, and to dry your fish—I'm sure the sight of it always makes me feel uncomfortable, unless we have the wind dead off shore.

"Ah! Tom, you are a sensible fellow," said Barnstable, with an air half comic, half serious. "But we must be moving; the sun is just touching those clouds to sea-ward, and God keep us from riding out this night at anchor in such a place as this."

Laying his hand on a projection of the rock above him, Barnstable swung himself forward, and following this movement with a desperate leap or two, he stood at once on the brow of the cliff. His cockswain very deliberately raised the midshipman after his officer, and proceeding with more caution, but less exertion, he soon placed himself by his side.

When they reached the level land that lay above the cliffs, and began to inquire, with curious and wary eyes, into the surrounding scenery, the adventurers discovered a cultivated country, divided, in the usual manner, by hedges and walls. Only one habitation for man, however, and that a small dilapidated cottage, stood within a mile of them, most of the

dwellings being placed as far as convenience would permit, from the fogs and damps of the ocean.

"Here seems to be neither any thing to apprehend, nor the object of our search," said Barnstable, when he had taken the whole view in his survey; "I fear we have landed to no purpose, Mr. Merry. What say you long Tom; see you what we want?"

"I see no pilot, sir," returned the cockswain; "but its an ill wind that blows luck to nobody; there is a mouthful of fresh meat stowed away under that row of bushes that would make a double ration to all hands in the Ariel."

The midshipman laughed, as he pointed out to Barnstable the object of the cockswain's solicitude, which proved to be a fat ox, quietly ruminating under a hedge near them.

"There's many a hungry fellow aboard of us, said the boy merrily, "who would be glad to second long Tom's motion, if the time and business would permit us to slay the animal."

"It is but a lubber's blow, Mr. Merry," returned the cockswain, without a muscle of his hard face yielding, as he struck the end of his harpoon violently against the earth,

and then made a motion towards poising the weapon ; " let Captain Barnstable but say the word, and I'll drive the iron through him to the quick ; I've sent it to the seizing in many a whale, that hadn't a jacket of such blubber as that fellow wears."

" Pshaw ! you are not on a whaling voyage, where every thing that offers is game," said Barnstable, turning himself pettishly away from the beast, as if he distrusted his own forbearance ; " but stand fast ! I see some one approaching behind the hedge. Look to your arms, Mr. Merry—the first thing we hear may be a shot."

" Not from that cruiser," cried the thoughtless lad ; " he is a younker like myself, and would hardly dare run down upon such a formidable force as we muster."

" You say true, boy," returned Barnstable, relinquishing the grasp he held on his pistol. " He comes on with caution, as if afraid. He is small, and is in drab, though I should hardly call it a pee-jacket—and yet he may be our man. Stand you both here, while I go and hail him."

As Barnstable walked rapidly towards the hedge that in part concealed the stranger, the latter stopped suddenly, and

seemed to be in doubt whether to advance or to retreat. Before he had decided on either, the active sailor was within a few feet of him.

"Pray, sir," said Barnstable, "what water have you in this bay?

The slight form of the stranger started, with an extraordinary emotion, at this question, and he shrunk aside involuntarily, as if to conceal his features, before he answered, in a voice that was barely audible—

"I should think it would be the water of the German ocean."

"Indeed! you must have passed no small part of your short life in the study of geography, to be so well informed," returned the lieutenant; "perhaps, sir, your cunning is also equal to telling me how long we shall sojourn together, if I make you a prisoner, in order to enjoy the benifit of your wit?"

To this alarming intimation, the youth who was addressed made no reply; but, as he averted his face, and concealed it with both his hands, the offended seaman, believing that a

salutary impression had been made upon the fears of his auditor, was about to proceed with his interrogatories. The singular agitation of the stranger's frame, however, caused the lieutenant to continue silent a few moments longer, when to his utter amazement, he discovered that what he had mistaken for alarm, was produced by an endeavour, on the part of the youth, to suppress a violent fit of laughter.

"Now, by all the whales in the sea," cried Barnstable "but you are merry out of season, young gentleman. It's quite bad enough to be ordered to anchor in such a bay as this with a storm brewing before my eyes, without landing to be laughed at by a stripling who has not strength to carry a beard if he had one, when I ought to be getting an offing for the safety of both body and soul. But I'll know more of you and your jokes, if I take you into my own mess, and am giggled out of my sleep for the rest of the cruise."

As the commander of the schooner concluded, he approached the stranger, with an air of offering some violence, but the other shrunk back from his extended arm, and exclaimed, with a voice in which real terror had gotten the better of mirth—

"Barnstable! dear Barnstable! would you harm me?"

The sailor recoiled several feet, at this unexpected appeal, and rubbing his eyes, he threw the cap from his head, before he cried—

"What do I hear! and what do I see! There lies the Ariel—and yonder is the frigate. Can this be Katherine Plowden?"

His doubts, if any doubts remained, were soon removed, for the stranger sunk on the bank at her side, in an attitude in which female bashfulness was beautifully contrasted to her attire, and gave vent to her mirth in an uncontrollable burst of merriment.

From that moment, all thoughts of his duty, and the pilot, or even of the Ariel, appeared to be banished from the mind of the seaman, who sprang to her side, and joined in her mirth, though he hardly knew why or wherefore.

When the diverted girl had in some degree recovered her composure, she turned to her companion, who had sat, good-naturedly by her side, content to be laughed at, and said—

"But this is not only silly, but cruel to others. I owe you

an explanation of my unexpected appearance, and perhaps, also, of my extraordinary attire."

"I can anticipate everything," cried Barnstable; "you heard that we were on the coast, and have flown to redeem the promises you made me in America. But I ask no more; the chaplain of the frigate——"

"May preach as usual, and to as little purpose," interrupted the disguised female; "but no nuptial benediction shall be pronounced over me, until I have effected the object of this hazardous experiment. You are not usually selfish, Barnstable; would you have me forgetful of the happiness of others?"

"Of whom do you speak?"

"My poor, my devoted cousin. I heard that two vessels, answering the description of the frigate and the Ariel, were seen hovering on the coast, and I determined at once to have a communication with you. I have followed your movements for a week, in this dress, but have been unsuccessful till now. To-day, I observed you to approach nearer to the shore than usual, and happily, by being adventurous, I have been successful."

"Aye! God knows we are near enough to the land! But does Captain Munson know of your wish to get on board his ship?"

"Certainly not—none know of it but yourself. I thought that if Griffith and you could learn our situation, you might be tempted to hazard a little to redeem us from our thraldom. In this paper I have prepared such an account as will, I trust, excite all your chivalry, and by which you may govern your movements."

"Our movements!" interrupted Barnstable, "you will pilot us in person."

"Then there's two of them!" said a hoarse voice near them.

The alarmed female shrieked as she recovered her feet, but she still adhered, with instinctive dependence, to the side of her lover, Barnstable, who recognized the tones of his cockswain, bent an angry brow on the sober visage that was peering at them above the hedge, and demanded the meaning of the interruption.

"Seeing you were hull-down, sir, and not knowing but

the chase might lead you ashore, Mr. Merry thought it best to have a look-out kept. I told him that you were overhauling the mail-bags of the messenger for the news, but as he was an officer, sir, and I nothing but a common hand, I did as he ordered."

"Return, sir, where I commanded you to remain," said Barnstable, "and desire Mr. Merry to wait my pleasure."

The cockswain gave the usual reply of an obedient seaman, but before he left the hedge, he stretched out one of his brawny arms towards the ocean, and said, in tones of solemnity suited to his apprehensions and character—

"I showed you how to knot a reef-point, and pass a gasket, Captain Barnstable, nor do I believe you could even take two half-hitches when you first came aboard of the Spalmacitty. These be things that a man is soon expart in, but it takes the time of his nat'ral life to larn to know the weather. There be streaked wind-galls in the offing, that speak as plainly, to all that see them, and know God's language in the clouds, as ever you spoke through a trumpet, to shorten sail; besides, sir, don't you hear the sea moaning, as if it knew the hour was at hand when it was to wake up from its sleep!"

"Aye, Tom," returned his officer, walking to the edge of the cliffs, and throwing a seaman's glance at the gloomy ocean, "'tis a threatening night indeed; but this pilot must be had; and"—

"Is that the man?" interrupted the cockswain, pointing towards a man who was standing not far from them, an attentive observer of their proceedings, at the same time that he was narrowly watched himself by the young midshipman. "God send that he knows his trade well, for the bottom of a ship will need eyes to find its road out of this wild anchorage."

"That must indeed be the man!" exclaimed Barnstable, at once recalled to his duty. He then held a short dialogue with his female companion, whom he left concealed by the hedge, and proceeded to address the stranger. When near enough to be heard, the commander of the schooner demanded—

"What water have you in this bay?"

The stranger, who seemed to expect this question, answered without the least hesitation—

"Enough to take all out in safety, who have entered with confidence."

"You are the man I seek," cried Barnstable; "are you ready to go off."

"Both ready and willing," returned the pilot, "and there is need of haste. I would give the best hundred guineas that ever were coined, for two hours more use of that sun which has left us, or for even half the time of this fading twilight."

"Think you our situation so bad?" said the lieutenant. "Follow this gentleman to the boat then; I will join you by the time you can descend the cliffs. I believe I can prevail on another hand to go off with us."

"Time is more precious now than any number of hands," said the pilot, throwing a glance of impatience from under his lowering brows, "and the consequences of delay must be visited on those who occasion it."

"And, sir, I will meet the consequences with those who have a right to inquire into my conduct," said Barnstable, haughtily.

With this warning and retort they separated; the young officer retracing his steps impatiently towards his mistress, muttering his indignation in suppressed execrations, and the pilot, drawing the leathern belt of his pee-jacket mechanically around his body, as he followed the midshipman and cockswain to their boat, in moody silence.

Barnstable found the disguised female who had announced herself as Katherine Plowden, awaiting his return, with intense anxiety depicted on every feature of her intelligent countenance. As he felt all the responsibility of his situation, notwithstanding his cool reply to the pilot, the young man hastily drew an arm of the apparent boy, forgetful of her disguise, through his own, and led her forward.

"Come, Katherine," he said, "the time urges to be prompt."

"What pressing necessity is there for immediate departure?" she inquired, checking his movements by withdrawing herself from his side.

"You heard the ominous prognostic of my cockswain on the weather, and I am forced to add my own testimony to his opinion. 'Tis a crazy night that threatens us, though I

cannot repent of coming into the bay, since it has led to this interview."

"God forbid that we should either of us have cause to repent of it," said Katherine, the paleness of anxiety chasing away the rich bloom that had mantled the animated face of the brunette. "But you have the paper—follow its directions, and come to our rescue; you will find us willing captives, if Griffith and yourself are our conquerors."

"What mean you, Katherine!" exclaimed her lover; "you at least are now in safety—'twould be madness to tempt your fate again. My vessel can and shall protect you, until your cousin is redeemed; and then, remember, I have a claim on you for life."

"And how would you dispose of me in the interval," said the young maiden, retreating slowly from his advances.

"In the Ariel—by heaven, you shall be her commander; I will bear that rank only in name."

"I thank you, thank you, Barnstable, but distrust my abilities to fill such a station," she said, laughing, though

the colour that again crossed her youthful features was like the glow of a summer's sunset, and even her mirthful eyes seemed to reflect their tints. "Do not mistake me, saucy one. If I have done more than my sex will warrant, remember it was through a holy motive, and if I have more than a woman's enterprise, it must be"—

"To lift you above the weakness of you sex," he cried, "and enable you to show your noble confidence in me."

"To fit me for, and to keep me worthy of being one day your wife." As she uttered these words, she turned, and disappeared, with a rapidity that eluded his attempt to detain her, behind an angle of the hedge, that was near them. For a moment, Barnstable remained motionless through surprise, and when he sprang forward in pursuit, he was able only to catch a glimpse of her light form, in the gloom of the evening as she again vanished in a little thicket at some distance.

Barnstable was about to pursue, when the air lighted with a sudden flash, and the bellowing report of a cannon rolled along the cliffs, and was echoed among the hills far inland.

"Ay, grumble away, old dotard!" the disappointed young sailor muttered to himself, while he reluctantly obeyed the signal; "you are in as great a hurry to get out of your danger as you were to run into it."

The quick reports of three muskets from the barge beneath where he stood, urged him to quicken his pace, and as he threw himself carelessly down the rugged and dangerous passes of the cliffs, his experienced eye beheld the well-known lights displayed from the frigate, which commanded "the recall of all her boats."

CHAPTER III.

In such a time as this, it is not meet
That every nice offence should bear its comment.

Shakespeare.

The cliffs threw their dark shadows wide on the waters, and the gloom of the evening had so far advanced, as to conceal the discontent that brooded over the ordinarily open brow of Barnstable, as he sprang from the rocks into the boat, and took his seat by the side of the silent pilot.

"Shove off," cried the lieutenant, in tones that his men knew must be obeyed. "A seaman's curse light on the folly that exposes planks and lives to such navigation; and all to burn some old timber-man, or catch a Norway trader asleep! give way, men, give way."

Notwithstanding the heavy and dangerous surf that was

beginning to tumble in upon the rocks, in an alarming manner, the startled seamen succeeded in urging their light boat over the waves, and in a few seconds were without the point where danger was most to be apprehended. Barnstable had seemingly disregarded the breakers as they passed, but sat sternly eyeing the foam that rolled by them in successive surges, until the boat rose regularly on the long seas, when he turned his looks around the bay in quest of the barge.

"Ay, Griffith has tired of rocking in his pillowed cradle," he muttered, "and will give us a pull to the frigate, when we ought to be getting the schooner out of this hard-featured landscape. This is just such a place as one of your sighing lovers would doat on; a little land, a little water, and a good deal of rock. Dam'me, long Tom, but I am more than half of your mind, that an island now and then is all the terra firma that a seaman needs.

"It's reason and philosophy, sir," returned the sedate cockswain; "and what land there is, should always be a soft mud, or a sandy ooze, in order that an anchor might hold, and to make soundings sartin. I have lost many a deep-sea, besides hand-leads, by the dozens, on rocky bottoms; but give me the roadstead where a lead comes up light, and an anchor heavy. There's a boat pulling athwart our fore-foot,

Captain Barnstable; shall I run her aboard, or give her a berth, sir?"

"'Tis the barge!" cried the officer; "Ned has not deserted me after all!"

A loud hail from the approaching boat confirmed this opinion, and, in a few seconds, the barge and whale-boat were again rolling by each other's side. Griffith was no longer reclining on the cushions of his seats, but spoke earnestly and with a slight tone of reproach in his manner.

"Why have you wasted so many precious moments when every minute threatens us with new dangers? I was obeying the signal, but I heard your oars, and pulled back to take out the pilot. Have you been successful?"

"There he is; and if he finds his way out, through the shoals, he will earn a right to his name. This bids fair to be a night when a man will need a spy-glass to find the moon. But when you hear what I have seen on those rascally cliffs, you will be more ready to excuse my delay, Mr. Griffith."

"You have seen the true man, I trust, or we incur this hazard to an evil purpose."

"Ay, I have seen him that is a true man, and him that is not," replied Barnstable, bitterly; "you have the boy with you, Griffith—ask him what his young eyes have seen."

"Shall I!" cried the young midshipman, laughing: "then I have seen a little clipper, in disguise, outsail an old man-of-war's man in a hard chase, and I have seen a straggling rover in long togs as much like my cousin—"

"Peace, gabbler!" exclaimed Barnstable, in a voice of thunder; "would you detain the boats with your silly nonsense, at a time like this! Away into the barge, sir, and if you find him willing to hear, tell Mr. Griffith what your foolish conjectures amount to, at your leisure."

The boy stepped lightly from the whale-boat to the barge, whither the pilot had already preceded him, and, as he sunk, with a mortified air, by the side of Griffith, he said, in a low voice—

"And that won't be long, I know, if Mr. Griffith thinks and feels on the coast of England as he thought and felt at home."

A silent pressure of his hand was the only reply that the young lieutenant made, before he paid the parting compli-

ments to Barnstable, and directed his men to pull for their ship.

The boats were separating, and the plash of the oars was already heard, when the voice of the pilot was for the first time raised in earnest.

"Hold!" he cried; "hold water, I bid ye!"

The men ceased their efforts, at the commanding tones of his voice, and turning towards the whale-boat he continued—

"You will get your schooner under weigh immediately, Captain Barnstable, and sweep into the offing with as little delay as possible. Keep the ship well open from the northern headland, and as you pass us, come within hail."

"This is a clean chart and plain sailing, Mr. Pilot," returned Barnstable; "but who is to justify my moving without orders, to Captain Munson? I have it in black and white, to run the Ariel into this feather-bed sort of a place, and I must at least have it by signal or word of mouth from my betters before my cut-water curls another wave. The road may be as hard to find going out as it was coming in—and then I had daylight as well as your written directions to steer by."

"Would you lie there to perish on such a night!" said the pilot, sternly. "Two hours hence, this heavy swell will break where your vessel now rides so quietly."

"There we think exactly alike; but if I get drowned now, I am drowned according to orders; whereas, if I knock a plank out of the schooner's bottom, by following your directions, 'twill be a hole to let in mutiny, as well as sea-water. How do I know but the old man wants another pilot or two?"

"That's philosophy," muttered the cockswain of the whale-boat, in a voice that was audible; "but it's a hard strain on a man's conscience to hold on in such an anchorage!"

"Then keep your anchor down, and follow it to the bottom," said the pilot to himself; "it's worse to contend with a fool than a gale of wind; but if—"

"No, no, sir—no fool neither," interrupted Griffith. "Barnstable does not deserve that epithet, though he certainly carries the point of duty to the extreme. Heave up at once, Mr. Barnstable, and get out of this bay as fast as possible."

"Ah, you don't give the order with half the pleasure with

which I shall execute it; pull away, boys—the Ariel shall never lay her bones in such a hard bed, if I can help it."

As the commander of the schooner uttered these words with a cheering voice, his men spontaneously shouted, and the whale-boat darted away from her companion, and was soon lost in the gloomy shadows cast from the cliffs.

In the mean time, the oarsmen of the barge were not idle, but by strenuous efforts they forced the heavy boat rapidly through the water, and in a few minutes she ran alongside of the frigate. During this period the pilot, in a voice which had lost all the startling fierceness and authority it had manifested in his short dialogue with Barnstable requested Griffith to repeat to him, slowly, the names of the officers that belonged to his ship. When the young lieutenant had complied with his request, he observed to his companion—

"All good men and true, Mr. Pilot; and though this business in which you are just now engaged may be hazardous to an Englishman, there are none with us who will betray you. We need your services, and as we expect good faith from you, so shall we offer it to you in exchange."

"And how know you that I need its exercise?" asked the pilot in a manner that denoted a cold indifference to the subject.

"Why though you talk pretty good English, for a native," returned Griffith, "yet you have a small bur-r-r in your mouth that would prick the tongue of a man who was born on the other side of the Atlantic."

"It is but of little moment where a man is born, or how he speaks," returned the pilot coldly, "so that he does his duty bravely, and in good faith."

It was perhaps fortunate for the harmony of this dialogue, that the gloom, which had now increased to positive darkness, completely concealed the look of scornful irony that crossed the handsome features of the young sailor, as he replied—

"True, true, so that he does his duty, as you say, in good faith. But as Barnstable observed, you must know your road well to travel among these shoals on such a night as this. Know you what water we draw?"

"'Tis a frigate's draught, and I shall endeavour to keep you in four fathoms; less than that would be dangerous."

"She's a sweet boat!" said Griffith, and minds her helm as a marine watches the eye of his sergeant at a drill; but you must give her room in stays, for she fore-reaches, as if she would put out the wind's eye,"

The pilot attended, with a practised ear, to this description of the qualities of the ship that he was about to attempt extricating from an extremely dangerous situation. Not a syllable was lost on him, and when Griffith had ended, he remarked, with a singular coldness that pervaded his manner—

"That is both a good and bad quality in a narrow channel. I fear it will be the latter, to-night, when we shall require to have the ship in leading-strings."

"I suppose we must feel our way with the lead?" said Griffith.

"We shall need both eyes and leads," returned the pilot, recurring insensibly to his soliloquizing tone of voice. "I have been both in and out in darker nights than this, though never with a heavier draught than a half-two,"

"Then, by heaven, you are not fit to handle that ship among these rocks and breakers!" exclaimed Griffith; "your

men of a light draught never know their water; 'tis the deep keel only that finds a channel—pilot! pilot! beware how you trifle with us ignorantly; for 'tis a dangerous experiment to play at hazards with an enemy."

"Young man, you know not what you threaten, nor whom," said the pilot, sternly, though his quiet manner still remained undisturbed; "you forget that you have a superior here, and that I have none."

"That shall be as you discharge your duty," cried Griffith; "for if"—

"Peace!" interrupted the pilot; "we approach the ship; let us enter in harmony."

He threw himself back on the cushions, when he had said this, and Griffith, though filled with the apprehensions of suffering, either by great ignorance or treachery, on the part of his companion, smothered his feelings so far as to be silent, and they ascended the side of the vessel in apparent cordiality.

The frigate was already riding on lengthened seas, that rolled in from the ocean, at each successive moment, with

increasing violence, though her topsails still hung supinely from her yards; the air, which continued to breathe occasionally from the land, being unable to shake the heavy canvass of which they were composed.

The only sounds that were audible, when Griffith and the pilot had ascended to the gangway of the frigate, were produced by the sullen dashing of the sea against the massive bows of the ship, and the shrill whistle of the boatswain's mate, as he recalled the side boys, who were placed on either side of the gangway, to do honour to the entrance of the first lieutenant and his companion.

But though such a profound silence reigned among the hundreds who inhabited the huge fabric, the light produced by a dozen battle lanterns, that were arranged in different parts of the decks, served not only to exhibit, faintly, the persons of the crew, but the mingled feeling of curiosity and care that dwelt on most of their countenances.

Large groups of men were collected in the gangways, around the mainmast, and on the booms of the vessel, whose faces were distinctly visible, while numerous figures, lying along the lower yards, or bending out of the tops, might be dimly traced in the back ground, all of whom expressed, by

their attitudes, the interest they took in the arrival of the boat.

Though such crowds were collected in other parts of the vessel, the quarter-deck was occupied only by the officers, who were disposed according to their several ranks, and were equally silent and attentive as the remainder of the crew. In the front stood a small collection of young men, who, by their similarity of dress, were the equals and companions of Griffith, though his juniors in rank. On the opposite side of the vessel was a larger assemblage of youths, who claimed Mr. Merry as their fellow. Around the capstan three or four figures were standing, one of whom wore a coat of blue, with the scarlet facings of a soldier, and another the black vestments of the ship's chaplain. Behind these, and nearer the passage to the cabin, from which he had just ascended, stood the tall, erect form of the commander of the vessel.

After a brief salutation between Griffith and the junior officers, the former advanced, followed slowly by the pilot, to the place where he was expected by his veteran commander. The young man removed his hat entirely, as he bowed with a little more than his usual ceremony, and said—

"We have succeeded, sir, though not without more difficulty and delay than were anticipated."

"But you have not brought off the pilot," said the captain; "and without him, all our risk and trouble have been in vain."

"He is here," said Griffith, stepping aside, and extending his arm towards the man that stood behind him, wrapped to the chin in his coarse pee-jacket, and his face shadowed by the falling rims of a large hat, that had seen much and hard service.

"This!" exclaimed the captain; "then there is a sad mistake—this is not the man I would have seen, nor can another supply his place."

"I know not whom you expected, Captain Munson," said the stranger, in a low, quiet voice; "but if you have not forgotten the day when a very different flag from that emblem of tyranny that now hangs over yon tafferel was first spread to the wind, you may remember the hand that raised it."

"Bring here the light!" exclaimed the commander, hastily.

When the lantern was extended towards the pilot, and the glare fell strong on his features, Captain Munson started, as he beheld the calm blue eye that met his gaze, and the composed but pallid countenance of the other. Involuntarily raising his hat, and baring his silver locks, the veteran cried—

"It is he! though so changed"—

"That his enemies did not know him," interrupted the pilot, quickly; then touching the other by the arm as he led him aside, he continued, in a lower tone, "neither must his friends, until the proper hour shall arrive."

Griffith had fallen back, to answer the eager questions of his messmates, and no part of this short dialogue was overheard by the officers, though it was soon perceived that their commander had discovered his error, and was satisfied that the proper man had been brought on board his vessel. For many minutes the two continued to pace a part of the quarter-deck, by themselves, engaged in deep and earnest discourse.

As Griffith had but little to communicate, the curiosity of his listeners was soon appeased, and all eyes were directed

towards that mysterious guide, who was to conduct them from a situation already surrounded by perils, which each moment not only magnified in appearance, but increased in reality.

CHAPTER IV.

——"Behold the threaden sails,
Borne with the invisible and creeping winds,
Draw the huge bottoms through the furrowed sea,
Breasting the lofty surge."

Shakspeare.

It has been already explained to the reader, that there were threatening symptoms in the appearance of the weather to create serious forebodings of evil in the breast of a seaman. When removed from the shadows of the cliffs, the night was not so dark but objects could be discerned at some little distance, and in the eastern horizon there was a streak of fearful light impending over the gloomy waters, in which the swelling outline, formed by the rising waves, was becoming each moment more distinct, and, consequently, more alarming. Several dark clouds overhung the vessel, whose towering masts apparently propped the black vapour, while a few stars were seen twinkling, with a sickly flame, in the streak

of clear sky that skirted the ocean. Still, light currents of air, occasionally, swept across the bay, bringing with them the fresh odour from the shore, but their flitting irregularity too surely foretold them to be the expiring breath of the land breeze. The roaring of the surf, as it rolled on the margin of the bay, produced a dull, monotonous sound, that was only interrupted, at times, by a hollow bellowing, as a larger wave than usual broke violently against some cavity in the rocks. Every thing, in short united to render the scene gloomy and portentous, without creating instant terror, for the ship rose easily on the long billows, without even straightening the heavy cable that held her to anchor.

The higher officers were collected around the capstan, engaged in earnest discourse about their situation and prospects, while some of the oldest and most favoured seamen would extend their short walk to the hallowed precincts of the quarter-deck, to catch, with greedy ears, the opinions that fell from their superiors. Numberless were the uneasy glances that were thrown from both officers and men at their commander and the pilot, who still continued their secret communion in a distant part of the vessel. Once, an ungovernable curiosity, or the heedlessness of his years, led one of the youthful midshipmen near them, but a stern rebuke from his captain sent the boy, abashed and cowering to hide his mortification among his fellows. This reprimand

was received by the elder officers as an intimation that the consultation they held was to be strictly inviolate; and though it by no means suppressed the repeated expressions of their impatience, it effectually prevented an interruption to the communications, which all, however, thought were unreasonably protracted for the occasion.

"This is no time to be talking over bearings and distances," observed the officer next in rank to Griffith; "but we should, call the hands up, and try to kedge her off while the sea will suffer a boat to live."

"'Twould be a tedious and bootless job to attempt warping a ship for miles against a head-beating sea," returned the first lieutenant; "but the land-breeze yet flutters aloft, and if our light sails would draw, with the aid of this ebb-tide we might be able to shove her from the shore."

"Hail the tops, Griffith," said the other, "and ask if they feel air above; 'twill be a hint at least to set the old man and that lubberly pilot in motion."

Griffith laughed, as he complied with the request, and when he received the customary reply to his call, he demanded, in a loud voice—

"Which way have you the wind, aloft?"

"We feel a light cat's-paw, now and then, from the land, sir," returned the sturdy captain of the top; "but our topsails hang in the clewliness, sir, without winking."

Captain Munson and his companion suspended their discourse, while this question and answer were exchanged, and then resumed their dialogue as earnestly as if it had received no interruption.

"If it did wink, the hint would be lost on our betters," said the officer of marines, whose ignorance of seamanship added greatly to his perception of the danger, but who, from pure idleness, made more jokes than any other man in the ship. "That pilot will not receive a delicate intimation through his ears, Mr. Griffith; suppose you try him by the nose."

"Faith, there was a flash of gunpowder between us in the barge," returned the first lieutenant, "and he does not seem a man to stomach such hints as you advise. Although he looks so meek and quiet, I doubt whether he has paid much attention to the book of Job."

"Why should he," exclaimed the chaplain, whose appre-

hensions at least equalled those of the marine, and with a much more disheartening effect; "I'm sure it would have been a great waste of time; there are so many charts of the coast, and books on the navigation of these seas, for him to study, that I sincerely hope he has been much better employed."

A loud laugh was created at this speech, among the listeners, and it apparently produced the effect that was so long anxiously desired, by putting an end to the mysterious conference between their captain and the pilot. As the former came forward towards his expecting crew, he said, in the composed, steady manner, that formed the principal trait in his character—

"Get the anchor, Mr. Griffith, and make sail on the ship; the hour has arrived, we must be moving."

The cheerful "Ay, ay, sir!" of the young lieutenant was hardly uttered, before the cries of half a dozen midshipmen were heard summoning the boatswain and his mates to their duty.

There was a general movement in the living masses that clustered around the mainmast, on the booms, and in the gangways, though their habits of discipline held the crew a moment longer in suspense. The silence was first broken

by the sound of the boatswain's whistle, followed by the hoarse cry of "All hands, up anchor, ahoy!"—the former rising on the night-air, from its first low, mellow notes, to a piercing shrillness, that gradually died away on the waters; and the latter bellowing through every cranny of the ship, like the hollow murmurs of distant thunder.

The change produced by the customary summons was magical. Human beings sprang out from between the guns, rushed up the hatches, threw themselves with careless activity from the booms, and gathered from every quarter so rapidly, that, in an instant, the deck of the frigate was alive with men. The profound silence, that had hitherto been only interrupted by the low dialogue of the officers, was now exchanged for the stern orders of the lieutenants, mingled with the shriller cries of the midshipmen, and the hoarse bawling of the boatswain's crew, rising above the tumult of preparation and general bustle.

The captain and the pilot alone remained passive, in this scene of general exertion; for apprehension had even stimulated that class of officers which is called "idlers," to unusual activity, though frequently reminded by their more experienced messmates, that instead of aiding, they retarded, the duty of the vessel. The bustle, however, gradually

ceased, and, in a few minutes the same silence pervaded the ship as before.

"We are brought-to, sir," said Griffith, who stood overlooking the scene, holding in one hand a short speaking-trumpet, and grasping, with the other, one of the shrouds of the ship, to steady himself in the position he had taken on a gun.

"Heave round, sir," was the calm reply.

"Heave round!" repeated Griffith, aloud.

"Heave round?" echoed a dozen eager voices at once, and the lively strains of a fife struck up a brisk air, to enliven the labour. The capstan was instantly set in motion, and the measured tread of the seamen was heard, as they stamped the deck in the circle of their march. For a few minutes, no other sounds were heard, if we except the voice of an officer, occasionally, cheering the sailors, when it was announced, that they "were short;" or, in other words, that the ship was nearly over her anchor.

"Heave and pall," cried Griffith; when the quivering notes of the whistle were again succeeded by a general stillness in the vessel.

"What is to be done now, sir?" continued the lieutenant; "shall we trip the anchor? There seems not a breath of air, and as the tide runs slack, I doubt whether the sea do not heave the ship ashore."

There was so much obvious truth in this conjecture, that all eyes turned from the light and animation afforded by the decks of the frigate, to look abroad on the waters, in a vain desire to pierce the darkness, as if to read the fate of their apparently devoted ship from the aspect of nature.

"I leave all to the pilot," said the captain, after he had stood a short time by the side of Griffith, anxiously studying the heavens and the ocean. "What say you, Mr. Gray?"

The man who was, thus, first addressed by name, was leaning over the bulwarks, with his eyes bent in the same direction as the others; but as he answered, he turned his face towards the speaker, and the light from the deck fell full upon his quiet features, which exhibited a calmness bordering on the supernatural, considering his station and responsibility.

"There is much to fear from this heavy ground swell,"

he said, in the same unmoved tones as before; "but there is certain destruction to us, if the gale that is brewing in the east finds us waiting its fury in this wild anchorage. All the hemp that was ever spun into cordage would not hold a ship an hour, chafing on these rocks, with a north-easter pouring its fury on her. If the powers of man can compass it, gentlemen, we must get an offing, and that speedily."

"You say no more, sir, than the youngest boy in the ship can see for himself," said Griffith—"ha! here comes the schooner!"

The dashing of the long sweeps in the water was now plainly audible, and the little Ariel was seen through the gloom, moving heavily under their feeble impulse. As she passed slowly under the stern of the frigate, the cheerful voice of Barnstable was first heard, opening the communications between them.

"Here's a night for spectacles, Captain Munson!" he cried; "but I thought I heard your fife, sir; I trust in God, you do not mean to ride it out here till morning?"

"I like the berth as little as yourself, Mr. Barnstable," returned the veteran seaman, in his calm manner, in which

anxiety was, however, beginning to grow evident. "We are short; but are afraid to let go our hold of the bottom, lest the sea cast us ashore. How make you out the wind?"

"Wind!" echoed the other; "there is not enough to blow a lady's curl aside. If you wait, sir, till the land breeze fills your sails, you will wait another moon, I believe. I've got my egg-shell out of that nest of grey caps, but how it has been done in the dark, a better man than myself must explain."

"Take your directions from the pilot, Mr. Barnstable," returned his commanding-officer, "and follow them strictly and to the letter."

A death-like silence, in both vessels, succeeded this order, for all seemed to listen eagerly to catch the words that fell from the man, on whom, even the boys now felt, depended their only hopes for safety. A short time was suffered to elapse, before his voice was heard, in the same low but distinct tones as before—

"Your sweeps will soon be of no service to you," he said "against the sea that begins to heave in; but your light sails will help them to get you out. So long as you can

head east-and-by-north, you are doing well, and you can stand on till you open the light from that northern headland, when you can heave-to, and fire a gun; but if as I dread, you are struck a-back, before you open the light you may trust to your lead on the larboard tack; but beware, with your head to the southward, for no lead will serve you there."

"I can walk over the same ground on one tack as on the other," said Barnstable, "and make both legs of a length."

"It will not do," returned the pilot. "If you fall off a point to starboard from east-and-by-north, in going large, you will find both rocks and points of shoals to bring you up; and beware, as I tell you, of the starboard tack."

"And how shall I find my way? you will let me trust to neither time, lead, nor log."

"You must trust to a quick eye and a ready hand. The breakers only will show you the dangers, when you are not able to make out the bearings of the land. Tack in season, sir, and don't spare the lead, when you head to-port."

"Ay, ay," returned Barnstable, in a low muttering voice,

"this is a sort of blind navigation with a vengeance, and all for no purpose that I can see—see! dam'me, eyesight is of about as much use now, as a man's nose would be in reading the bible."

"Softly, softly, Mr. Barnstable," interrupted his commander, for such was the anxious stillness of both vessels, that even the rattling of the schooner's rigging was heard, as she rolled in the trough of the sea—"the duty on which Congress has sent us must be performed at the hazard of our lives."

"I don't mind my life, Captain Munson," said Barnstable; "but there is a great want of conscience in trusting a vessel in such a place as this. However, it is time to do, and not to talk. But if there be such danger to an easy draught of water, what will become of the frigate? Had I not better play jackall, and try and feel the way for you?"

"I thank you," said the pilot; "the offer is generous, but would avail us nothing. I have the advantage of knowing the ground well, and must trust to my memory and God's good favour. Make sail, make sail, sir, and if you succeed, we will venture to break ground."

The order was promptly obeyed, and in a very short time the Ariel was covered with canvass. Though no air was perceptible on the decks of the frigate, the little schooner was so light, that she succeeded in stemming her way over the rising waves, aided a little by the tide, and in a few minutes, her low hull was just discernible in the streak of light along the horizon with the dark outline of her sails, rising above the sea, until their fanciful summits were lost in the shadows of the clouds.

Griffith had listened to the foregoing dialogue, like the rest of the junior officers, in profound silence; but when the Ariel began to grow indistinct to the eye, he jumped lightly from the gun to the deck, and cried—

"She slips off, like a vessel from the stocks! shall I trip the anchor, sir, and follow?"

"We have no choice," replied his captain. "You hear the question, Mr. Gray? shall we let go the bottom?"

"It must be done, Captain Munson; we may want more drift than the rest of this tide to get us to a place of safety," said the pilot: "I would give five years from a life that I know will be short, if the ship lay one mile further seaward."

This remark was unheard by all excepting the commander of the frigate, who again walked aside with the pilot, where they resumed their mysterious communications. The words of assent were no sooner uttered, however, than Griffith gave forth from his trumpet the command to "heave away!" Again the strains of the fife were followed by the tread of the men at the capstan. At the same time that the anchor was heaving up, the sails were loosened from the yards, and opened to invite the breeze. In effecting this duty, orders were thundered through the trumpet of the first lieutenant, and executed with the rapidity of thought. Men were to be seen, like spots in the dim light from the heavens, lying on every yard, or hanging as in air, while strange cries were heard issuing from every part of the rigging, and each spar of the vessel. "Ready the fore-royal," cried a shrill voice, as if from the clouds; "ready the fore-yard," uttered the hoarser tones of a seaman beneath him; "all ready aft, sir," cried a third, from another quarter; and in a few moments, the order was given to "let fall."

The little light which fell from the sky was now excluded by the falling canvass, and a deeper gloom was cast athwart the decks of the ship, that served to render the brilliancy of the lanterns even vivid, while it gave to objects out-board a more appalling and dreary appearance than before.

Every individual, excepting the commander and his associate, were now earnestly engaged in getting the ship under way. The sounds of "we're away," were repeated by a burst from fifty voices, and the rapid evolutions of the capstan announced that nothing but the weight of the anchor was to be lifted. The hauling of cordage, the rattling of blocks, blended with the shrill calls of the boatswain and his mates, succeeded; and though to a landsman all would have appeared confusion and hurry, long practice and strict discipline enabled the crew to exhibit their ship under a cloud of canvass, from her deck to the trucks, in less time than we have consumed in relating it.

For a few minutes, the officers were not disappointed by the result, for though the heavy sails flapped lazily against the masts, the light duck on the loftier spars swelled outwardly, and the ship began sensibly to yield to their influence.

"She travels! she travels!" exclaimed Griffith, joyously; "ah! the hussey! she has as much antipathy to the land as any fish that swims: it blows a little gale aloft yet!"

"We feel its dying breath," said the pilot, in low, soothing tones, but in a manner so sudden as to startle Griffith, at whose elbow they were unexpectedly uttered. "Let

us forget, young man, every thing but the number of lives that depend, this night, on your exertions and my knowledge."

"If you be but half as able to exhibit the one, as I am willing to make the other, we shall do well," returned the lieutenant, in the same tone. "Remember, whatever may be your feelings, that *we* are on an enemy's coast, and love it not enough to wish to lay our bones there."

With this brief explanation they separated, the vessel requiring the constant and close attention of the officer to her movements.

The exultation produced in the crew by the progress of their ship through the water was of short duration; for the breeze that had seemed to await their motions, after forcing the vessel for a quarter of a mile, fluttered for a few minutes amid their light canvass, and then left them entirely. The quarter-master, whose duty it was to superintend the helm, soon announced that he was losing the command of the vessel, as she was no longer obedient to her rudder. This ungrateful intelligence was promptly communicated to his commander by Griffith, who suggested the propriety of again dropping an anchor.

"I refer you to Mr. Gray," returned the captain; "he is the pilot, sir, and with him rests the safety of the vessel."

"Pilots sometimes lose ships, as well as save them," said Griffith; "know you the man well, Captain Munson, who holds all our lives in his keeping, and so coolly as if he cared but little for the venture?"

"Mr. Griffith, I do know him! he is, in my opinion, both competent and faithful. Thus much I tell you, to relieve your anxiety; more you must not ask;—but is there not a shift of wind?"

"God forbid!" exclaimed his lieutenant; "if that north-easter catches us within the shoals, our case will be desperate indeed!"

The heavy rolling of the vessel caused an occasional expansion, and as sudden a re-action, in their sails, which left the oldest seaman of the ship in doubt which way the currents of air were passing, or whether there existed any that were not created by the flapping of their own canvass. The head of the ship, however, began to fall off from the sea, and notwithstanding the darkness, it soon became apparent that she was driving in, bodily, towards the shore.

During these few minutes of gloomy doubt, Griffith, by one of those sudden revulsions of the mind, that connect the opposite extremes of feeling, lost his animated anxiety, and relapsed into the listless apathy that so often came over him, even in the most critical moments of trial and danger. He was standing, with one elbow resting on the capstan, shading his eyes from the light of the battle-lantern that stood near him, with one hand, when he felt a gentle pressure of the other, that recalled his recollection. Looking affectionately, though still recklessly, at the boy who stood at his side, he said—

"Dull music, Mr. Merry."

"So dull, sir, that I can't dance to it," returned the midshipman. "Nor do I believe there is a man in the ship who would not rather hear 'The girl I left behind me,' than those execrable sounds."

"What sounds, boy! The ship is as quiet as the quaker meeting in the Jerseys, before your good old grandfather used to break the charm of silence with his sonorous voice."

"Ah! laugh at my peaceable blood, if thou wilt, Mr. Grif-

fith," said the arch youngster; "but remember, there is a mixture of it in all sorts of veins. I wish I could hear one of the old gentleman's chants now, sir; I could always sleep to them, like a gull in a surf. But he that sleeps to-night, with that lullaby, will make a nap of it."

"Sounds! I hear no sounds, boy, but the flapping aloft; even that pilot, who struts the quarter-deck like an admiral, has nothing to say."

"Is not that a sound to open a seaman's ear?"

"It is in truth a heavy roll of the surf, lad, but the night air carries it heavily to our ears. Know you not the sounds of the surf yet, younker?"

"I know it too well, Mr. Griffith, and do not wish to know it better. How fast are we tumbling in towards that surf, sir?"

"I think we hold our own," said Griffith, rousing again; "though we had better anchor. Luff, fellow, luff, you are broadside to the sea!"

The man at the wheel repeated his former intelligence,

adding a suggestion, that he thought the ship "was gathering stern way."

"Haul up your courses, Mr. Griffith," said Captain Munson, "and let us feel the wind."

The rattling of the blocks was soon heard, and the enormous sheets of canvass that hung from the lower yards were instantly suspended "in the brails." When this change was effected, all on board stood silent and breathless, as if expecting to learn their fate by the result. Several contradictory opinions were, at length, hazarded among the officers, when Griffith seized the candle from the lantern, and, springing on one of the guns, held it on high, exposed to the action of the air. The little flame waved, with uncertain glimmering, for a moment, and then burned steadily, in a line with the masts. Griffith was about to lower his extended arm, when feeling a slight sensation of coolness on his hand, he paused, and the light turned slowly towards the land, flared, flickered, and finally deserted the wick.

"Lose not a moment, Mr. Griffith," cried the pilot aloud; "clew up and furl every thing but your three top-sails, and let them be double-reefed. Now is the time to fulfil your promise."

The young man paused one moment in astonishment, as the clear distinct tones of the stranger struck his ears so unexpectedly ; but turning his eyes to seaward, he sprang on the deck, and proceeded to obey the order, as if life and death depended on his despatch.

CHAPTER V.

"She rights, she rights, boys! wear off shore."

Song.

The extraordinary activity of Griffith, which communicated itself with promptitude to the crew, was produced by a sudden alteration in the weather. In place of the well-defined streak along the horizon, that has been already described, an immense body of misty light appeared to be coming in, with rapidity, from the ocean, while a distinct but distant roaring announced the sure approach of the tempest, that had so long troubled the waters. Even Griffith, while thundering his orders through the trumpet, and urging the men, by his cries, to expedition, would pause, for instants, to cast anxious glances in the direction of the coming storm; and the faces of the sailors who lay on the yards were turned, instinctively, towards the same quarter of the heavens, while they knotted the reef-points, or passed the gaskets, that were to confine the unruly canvass to the prescribed limits.

The pilot alone, in that confused and busy throng, where voice rose above voice, and cry echoed cry, in quick succession, appeared as if he held no interest in the important stake. With his eyes steadily fixed on the approaching mist, and his arms folded together in composure, he stood calmly waiting the result.

The ship had fallen off, with her broadside to the sea, and was become unmanageable, and the sails were already brought into the folds necessary to her security, when the quick and heavy fluttering of canvass was thrown across the water, with all the gloomy and chilling sensations that such sounds produce, where darkness and danger unite to appal the seaman.

"The schooner has it!" cried Griffith; "Barnstable has held on, like himself, to the last moment—God send that the squall leave him cloth enough to keep him from the shore!"

"His sails are easily handled," the commander observed, "and she must be over the principal danger. We are falling off before it, Mr. Gray; shall we try a cast of the lead?"

The pilot turned from his contemplative posture, and

moved slowly across the deck before he returned any reply to this question—like a man who not only felt that every thing depended on himself, but that he was equal to the emergency.

"'Tis unnecessary," he at length said; "'twould be certain destruction to be taken aback, and it is difficult to say, within several points, how the wind may strike us."

"'Tis difficult no longer," cried Griffith; "for here it comes, and in right earnest!"

The rushing sounds of the wind were now, indeed, heard at hand, and the words were hardly past the lips of the young lieutenant, before the vessel bowed down heavily to one side, and then, as she began to move through the water, rose again majestically to her upright position, as if saluting, like a courteous champion, the powerful antagonist with which she had to contend. Not another minute elapsed, before the ship was throwing the waters aside, with a lively progress, and, obedient to her helm, was brought as near to the desired course as the direction of the wind would allow. The hurry and bustle of the yards gradually subsided, and the men slowly descended to the deck, all straining their eyes to pierce the gloom in which they were enveloped, and

some shaking their heads, in melancholy doubt, afraid to express the apprehensions they really entertained. All on board anxiously waited for the fury of the gale; for there were none so ignorant or inexperienced in that gallant frigate, as not to know, that as yet, they only felt the infant efforts of the wind. Each moment, however, it increased in power, though so gradual was the alteration, that the relieved mariners began to believe that all their gloomy forebodings were not to be realized. During this short interval of uncertainty, no other sounds were heard than the whistling of the breeze, as it passed quickly through the mass or rigging that belonged to the vessel, and the dashing of the spray, that began to fly from her bows, like the foam of a cataract.

"It blows fresh," cried Griffith, who was the first to speak in that moment of doubt and anxiety; "but it is no more than a capful of wind, after all. Give us elbow room, and the right canvass, Mr. Pilot, and I'll handle the ship like a gentleman's yacht, in this breeze."

"Will she stay, think ye, under this sail?" said the low voice of the stranger.

"She will do all that man, in reason, can ask of wood and

iron," returned the lieutenant; "but the vessel don't float the ocean that will tack under double-reefed topsails alone, against a heavy sea. Help her with the courses, pilot, and you shall see her come round like a dancing-master."

"Let us feel the strength of the gale first," returned the man who was called Mr. Gray, moving from the side of Griffith to the weather gangway of the vessel, where he stood in silence, looking ahead of the ship, with an air of singular coolness and abstraction.

All the lanterns had been extinguished on the deck of the frigate, when her anchor was secured, and as the first mist of the gale had passed over, it was succeeded by a faint light that was a good deal aided by the glittering foam of the waters, which now broke in white curls around the vessel in every direction. The land could be faintly discerned, rising like a heavy bank of black fog, above the margin of the waters, and was only distinguishable from the heavens by its deeper gloom and obscurity. The last rope was coiled, and deposited in its proper place, by the seamen, and for several minutes the stillness of death pervaded the crowded decks. It was evident to every one, that their ship was dashing at a prodigious rate through the waves; and as she was approaching, with such velocity, the quarter of the

bay where the shoals and dangers were known to be situated, nothing but the habits of the most exact discipline could suppress the uneasiness of the officers and men within their own bosoms. At length the voice of Captain Munson was heard, calling to the pilot.

"Shall I send a hand into the chains, Mr. Gray," he said, "and try our water?"

Although this question was asked aloud, and the interest it excited drew many of the officers and men around him, in eager impatience for his answer, it was unheeded by the man to whom it was addressed. His head rested on his hand, as he leaned over the hammock-cloths of the vessel, and his whole air was that of one whose thoughts wandered from the pressing necessity of their situation. Griffith was among those who had approached the pilot, and after waiting a moment, from respect, to hear the answer to his commander's question, he presumed on his own rank, and leaving the circle that stood at a little distance, stepping to the side of the mysterious guardian of their lives.

"Captain Munson desires to know whether you wish a cast of the lead?" said the young officer, with a little impatience of manner. No immediate answer was made to this

repetition of the question, and Griffith laid his hand unceremoniously on the shoulder of the other, with an intent to rouse him, before he made another application for a reply, but the convulsive start of the pilot held him silent in amazement.

"Fall back there," said the lieutenant, sternly, to the men, who were closing around them in a compact circle; "away with you to your stations, and see all clear for stays." The dense mass of heads dissolved, at this order, like the water of one of the waves commingling with the ocean, and the lieutenant and his companions were left by themselves.

"This is not a time for musing, Mr. Gray," continued Griffith, "remember our compact, and look to your charge—is it not time to put the vessel in stays?—of what are you dreaming?"

The pilot laid his hand on the extended arm of the lieutenant, and grasped it with a convulsive pressure as he answered—

"'Tis a dream of reality. You are young, Mr. Griffith, nor am I past the noon of life; but should you live fifty years

longer, you never can see and experience what I have encountered in my little period of three-and-thirty years!"

A good deal astonished at this burst of feeling, so singular at such a moment, the young sailor was at a loss for a reply; but as his duty was uppermost in his thoughts, he still dwelt on the theme that most interested him.

"I hope much of your experience has been on this coast, for the ship travels lively," he said, "and the daylight showed us so much to dread, that we do not feel over-valiant in the dark. How much longer shall we stand on, upon this tack?"

The pilot turned slowly from the side of the vessel, and walked towards the commander of the frigate, as he replied, in a tone that seemed deeply agitated by his melancholy reflections—

"You have your wish, then; much, very much of my early life was passed on this dreaded coast. What to you is all darkness and gloom, to me is as light as if a noon-day sun shone upon it. But tack your ship, sir, tack your ship; I would see how she works before we reach the point where she *must* behave well, or we perish."

Griffith gazed after him in wonder, while the pilot slowly paced the quarter-deck, and then, rousing from his trance, gave forth the cheering order that called each man to his station, to perform the desired evolution. The confident assurances which the young officer had given to the pilot respecting the qualities of his vessel, and his own ability to manage her, were fully realized by the result. The helm was no sooner put a-lee, than the huge ship bore up gallantly against the wind, and dashing directly through the waves, threw the foam high into the air, as she looked boldly into the very eye of the wind, and then, yielding gracefully to its power, she fell off on the other tack, with her head pointed from those dangerous shoals that she had so recently approached with such terrifying velocity. The heavy yards swung round, as if they had been vanes to indicate the currents of the air, and in a few moments the frigate again moved, with stately progress, through the water, leaving the rocks and shoals behind her on one side of the bay, but advancing towards those that offered equal danger on the other.

During this time the sea was becoming more agitated, and the violence of the wind was gradually increasing. The latter no longer whistled amid the cordage of the vessel, but it seemed to howl, surlily, as it passed the complicated

machinery that the frigate obtruded on its path. An endless succession of white surges rose above the heavy billows, and the very air was glittering with the light that was disengaged from the ocean. The ship yielded, each moment, more and more before the storm, and in less than half an hour from the time that she had lifted her anchor, she was driven along with tremendous fury by the full power of a gale of wind. Still, the hardy and experienced mariners who directed her movements, held her to the course that was necessary to their preservation, and still Griffith gave forth, when directed by their unknown pilot, those orders that turned her in the narrow channel where safety was alone to be found.

So far, the performance of his duty appeared easy to the stranger, and he gave the required directions in those still, calm tones, that formed so remarkable a contrast to the responsibility of his situation. But when the land was becoming dim, in distance as well as darkness, and the agitated sea alone was to be discovered as it swept by them in foam, he broke in upon the monotonous roaring of the tempest with the sounds of his voice, seeming to shake off his apathy, and rouse himself to the occasion.

"Now is the time to watch her closely, Mr. Griffith," he

cried; "here we get the true tide and the real danger. Place the best quarter-master of your ship in those chains, and let an officer stand by him, and see that he gives us the right water."

"I will take that office on myself," said the captain; "pass a light into the weather main-chains."

"Stand by your braces!" exclaimed the pilot, with startling quickness. "Heave away that lead!"

These preparations taught the crew to expect the crisis, and every officer and man stood in fearful silence, at his assigned station, awaiting the issue of the trial. Even the quarter-master at the gun gave out his orders to the man at the wheel in deeper and hoarser tones than usual, as if anxious not to disturb the quiet and order of the vessel.

While this deep expectation pervaded the frigate, the piercing cry of the leadsman, as he called "by the mark seven," rose above the tempest, crossed over the decks, and appeared to pass away to leeward, borne on the blast like the warnings of some water spirit.

"'Tis well," returned the pilot, calmly, "try it again."

The short pause was succeeded by another cry, "and a half five!"

"She shoals! she shoals!" exclaimed Griffith; "keep her a good full."

"Ay! you must hold the vessel in command now," said the pilot, with those cool tones that are most appalling in critical moments, because they seem to denote most preparation and care.

The third call of "by the deep four!" was followed by a prompt direction from the stranger to tack.

Griffith seemed to emulate the coolness of the pilot, in issuing the necessary orders to execute this manœuvre.

The vessel rose slowly from the inclined position into which she had been forced by the tempest, and the sails were shaking violently, as if to release themselves from their confinement, while the ship stemmed the billows, when the well-known voice of the sailing-master was heard shouting from the forecastle—

"Breakers! breakers, dead ahead!"

This appalling sound seemed yet to be lingering about the ship, when a second voice cried—

"Breakers on our lee-bow!"

"We are in a bite of the shoals, Mr. Gray," cried the commander. "She loses her way; perhaps an anchor might hold her."

"Clear away that best bower," shouted Griffith, through his trumpet.

"Hold on!" cried the pilot, in a voice that reached the very hearts of all who heard him; "hold on everything."

The young man turned fiercely to the daring stranger, who thus defied the discipline of his vessel, and at once demanded—

"Who is it that dares to countermand my orders? Is it not enough that you run the ship into danger, but you must interfere to keep her there? If another word—"

"Peace, Mr. Griffith," interrupted the captain, bending from the rigging, his grey locks blowing about in the wind,

and adding a look of wildness to the haggard care that he exhibited by the light of the lantern; "yield the trumpet to Mr. Gray; he alone can save us."

Griffith threw his speaking-trumpet on the deck, and as he walked proudly away, muttered, in bitterness of feeling—

"Then all is lost, indeed; and among the rest, the foolish hopes with which I visited this coast."

There was, however, no time for reply; the ship had been rapidly running into the wind, and as the efforts of the crew were paralyzed by the contradictory orders they had heard, she gradually lost her way, and in a few seconds all her sails were taken aback.

Before the crew understood their situation, the pilot had applied the trumpet to his mouth, and in a voice that rose above the tempest, he thundered forth his orders. Each command was given distinctly, and with a precision that showed him to be master of his profession. The helm was kept fast, the head yards swung up heavily against the wind, and the vessel was soon whirling round on her heel, with a retrograde movement.

Griffith was too much of a seaman not to perceive that the pilot had seized, with a perception almost intuitive, the only method that promised to extricate the vessel from her situation. He was young, impetuous, and proud—but he was also generous. Forgetting his resentment and his mortification, he rushed forward among the men, and, by his presence and example, added certainty to the experiment. The ship fell off slowly before the gale, and bowed her yards nearly to the water, as she felt the blast pouring its fury on her broadside, while the surly waves beat violently against her stern, as if in reproach at her departing from her usual manner of moving.

The voice of the pilot, however, was still heard, steady and calm, and yet so clear and high as to reach every ear; and the obedient seamen whirled the yards at his bidding, in despite of the tempest, as if they handled the toys of their childhood. When the ship had fallen off dead before the wind, her head sails were shaken, her after yards trimmed, and her helm shifted, before she had time to run upon the danger that had threatened, as well to leeward as to windward. The beautiful fabric, obedient to her government, threw her bows up gracefully towards the wind again, and as her sails were trimmed, moved out from amongst the dangerous shoals in which she had been embayed, as steadily and as swiftly as she had approached them.

A moment of breathless astonishment succeeded the accomplishment of this nice manœuvre, but there was no time for the usual expressions of surprise. The stranger still held the trumpet, and continued to lift his voice amid the howlings of the blast, whenever prudence or skill directed any change in the management of the ship. For an hour longer, there was a fearful struggle for their preservation, the channel becoming, at each step, more complicated, and the shoals thickening around the mariners on every side. The lead was cast rapidly, and the quick eye of the pilot seemed to pierce the darkness, with a keenness of vision that exceeded human power. It was apparent to all in the vessel, that they were under the guidance of one who understood the navigation thoroughly, and their exertions kept pace with their reviving confidence. Again and again, the frigate appeared to be rushing blindly on shoals, where the sea was covered with foam, and where destruction would have been as sudden as it was certain, when the clear voice of the stranger was heard warning them of the danger, and inciting them to their duty. The vessel was implicitly yielded to his government, and during those anxious moments when she was dashing the waters aside, throwing the spray over her enormous yards, each ear would listen eagerly for those sounds that had obtained a command over the crew, that can only be acquired, under such circumstances, by great

steadiness and consummate skill. The ship was recovering from the inaction of changing her course, in one of those critical tacks that she had made so often, when the pilot, for the first time, addressed the commander of the frigate, who still continued to superintend the all-important duty of the leadsman.

"Now is the pinch," he said, "and if the ship behaves well, we are safe—but if otherwise, all we have yet done will be useless."

The veteran seaman whom he addressed left the chains at this portentous notice, and calling to his first lieutenant, required of the stranger an explanation of his warning.

"See you yon light on the southern headland?" returned the pilot; "you may know it from the star near it—by its sinking, at times, in the ocean. Now observe the hom-moc, a little north of it, looking like a shadow in the horizon—'tis a hill far inland. If we keep that light open from the hill, we shall do well—but if not, we surely go to pieces."

"Let us tack again!" exclaimed the lieutenant.

The pilot shook his head, as he replied—

"There is no more tacking or box-hauling to be done to-night. We have barely room to pass out of the shoals on this course, and if we can weather the 'Devil's Grip,' we clear their outermost point—but if not, as I said before, there is but an alternative."

"If we had beaten out the way we entered!" exclaimed Griffith, "we should have done well."

"Say, also, if the tide would have let us do so," returned the pilot, calmly. "Gentlemen, we must be prompt; we have but a mile to go, and the ship appears to fly. That topsail is not enough to keep her up to the wind; we want both jib and mainsail."

"'Tis a perilous thing to loosen canvass in such a tempest!" observed the doubtful captain.

"It must be done," returned the collected stranger; "we perish without it—see! the light already touches the edge of the hom-moc; the sea casts us to leeward!"

"It shall be done!" cried Griffith, seizing the trumpet from the hand of the pilot.

The orders of the lieutenant were executed almost as soon

as issued, and everything being ready, the enormous folds of the mainsail were trusted, loose, to the blast. There was an instant when the result was doubtful; the tremendous threshing of the heavy sail seeming to bid defiance to all restraint, shaking the ship to her centre; but art and strength prevailed, and gradually the canvass was distended, and bellying as it filled, was drawn down to its usual place by the power of a hundred men. The vessel yielded to this immense addition of force, and bowed before it, like a reed bending to a breeze. But the success of the measure was announced by a joyful cry from the stranger, that seemed to burst from his inward soul.

"She feels it! she springs her luff! Observe," he said, "the light opens from the hom-moc already; if she will only bear her canvass, we shall go clear!"

A report like that of a cannon, interrupted his exclamation, and something resembling a white cloud was seen drifting before the wind from the head of the ship, till it was driven into the gloom far to leeward.

"'Tis the jib, blown from the bolt-ropes," said the commander of the frigate. "This is no time to spread light duck—but the mainsail may stand it yet."

"The sail would laugh at a tornado," returned the lieutenant; "but the mast springs like a piece of steel."

"Silence all!" cried the pilot. "Now, gentlemen, we shall soon know our fate. Let her luff—luff you can!"

This warning effectually closed all discourse, and the hardy mariners, knowing that they had already done all in the power of man to ensure their safety, stood in breathless anxiety, awaiting the result. At a short distance ahead of them the whole ocean was white with foam, and the waves, instead of rolling on, in regular succession, appeared to be tossing about in mad gambols. A single streak of dark billows, not half a cable's length in width, could be discerned running into this chaos of water; but it was soon lost to the eye amid the confusion of the disturbed element. Along this narrow path the vessel moved more heavily than before, being brought so near the wind as to keep her sails touching. The pilot silently proceeded to the wheel, and with his own hands, he undertook the steerage of the ship. No noise proceeded from the frigate to interrupt the horrid tumult of the ocean, and she entered the channel among the breakers, with the silence of a desperate calmness. Twenty times, as the foam rolled away to leeward, the crew were on the eve of uttering their joy, as they supposed the vessel past

the danger; but breaker after breaker would still heave up before them, following each other into the general mass, to check their exultation. Occasionally, the fluttering of the sails would be heard; and when the looks of the startled seamen were turned to the wheel, they beheld the stranger grasping its spokes, with his quick eye glancing from the water to the canvass. At length the ship reached a point, where she appeared to be rushing directly into the jaws of destruction, when suddenly, her course was changed, and her head receded rapidly from the wind. At the same instant the voice of the pilot was heard, shouting—

"Square away the yards! in mainsail!"

A general burst from the crew echoed, "Square away the yards!" and, quick as thought, the frigate was seen gliding along the channel before the wind. The eye had hardly time to dwell on the foam, which seemed like clouds driving in the heavens, and directly the gallant vessel issued from her perils, and rose and fell on the heavy waves of the open sea.

The seamen were yet drawing long breaths, and gazing about them like men recovered from a trance, when Griffith approached the man who had so successfully conducted them

through their perils. The young lieutenant grasped the hand of the other, as he said—

"You have this night proved yourself a faithful pilot, and such a seaman as the world cannot equal."

The pressure of the hand was warmly returned by the unknown mariner, who replied—

"I am no stranger to the seas, and I may yet find my grave in them. But you, too, have deceived me; you have acted nobly, young man, and Congress—"

"What of Congress?" asked Griffith, observing him to pause.

"Why, Congress is fortunate if it has many such ships as this," said the stranger, coldly, walking away toward the commander.

Griffith gazed after him, a moment, in surprise; but as his duty required his attention, other thoughts soon engaged his mind.

The vessel was pronounced to be in safety. The gale was

heavy, and increasing; but there was a clear sea before them, and as she slowly stretched out into the bosom of the ocean, preparations were made for her security during its continuance. Before midnight everything was in order. A gun from the Ariel soon announced the safety of the schooner also, which had gone out by another and an easier channel, that the frigate had not dared to attempt; when the commander directed the usual watch to be set, and the remainder of the crew to seek their necessary repose.

The captain withdrew with the mysterious pilot to his own cabin. Griffith gave his last order, and renewing his charge to the officer entrusted with the care of the vessel, he wished him a pleasant watch, and sought the refreshment of his own cot. For an hour, the young lieutenant lay musing on the events of the day. The remark of Barnstable would occur to him, in connexion with the singular comment of the boy; and then his thoughts would recur to the pilot, who, taken from the hostile shores of Britain, and with her accent on his tongue, had served them so faithfully and so well. He remembered the anxiety of Captain Munson to procure this stranger, at the very hazard from which they had just been relieved, and puzzled himself with conjecturing why a pilot was to be sought at such a risk. His more private feelings would then resume their sway, and the

recollection of America, his mistress, and his home, mingled with the confused images of the drowsy youth. The dashing of the billows against the side of the ship, the creaking of guns, and bulk-heads, with the roaring of the tempest, however, became gradually less and less distinct, until nature yielded to necessity, and the young man forgot even the romantic images of his love in the deep sleep of a seaman.

CHAPTER VI.

"The letter! aye! the letter!
'Tis there a woman loves to speak her wishes;
It spares the blushes of the love sick maiden,
And every word's a smile, each line a tongue.

Duo.

The slumbers of Griffith continued till late on the following morning, when he was awakened by the report of a cannon, issuing from the deck above him. He threw himself, listlessly, from his cot, and perceiving the officer of marines near him, as his servant opened the door of his state room, he inquired with some little interest in his manner, "If the ship was in chase of any thing that a gun was fired?"

"'Tis no more than a hint to the Ariel," the soldier replied, "that there is bunting abroad for them to read. It seems as if all hands were asleep on board her, for we have

shown her signal, these ten minutes, and she takes us for a collier, I believe, by the respect she pays it."

"Say, rather, that she takes us for an enemy, and is wary," returned Griffith. "Brown Dick has played the English so many tricks himself, that he is tender of his faith."

"Why they have shown him a yellow flag over a blue one, with a cornet, and that spells Ariel, in every signal book we have; surely he can't suspect the English of knowing how to read Yankee."

"I have known Yankees read more difficult English," said Griffith, smiling; "but, in truth, I suppose that Barnstable has been, like myself, keeping a dead reckoning of his time, and his men have profited by the occasion. She is lying to, I trust."

"Aye! like a cork in a mill-pond, and I dare say you are right. Give Barnstable plenty of sea-room, a heavy wind, and but little sail, and he will send his men below, put that fellow he calls long Tom at the tiller, and follow himself, and sleep as quietly as I ever could at church."

"Ah! yours is a somniferous orthodoxy, Captain Manual," said the young sailor, laughing while he slipped his arms into the sleeves of a morning round-about covered with the gilded trappings of his profession; "sleep appears to come most natural to all you idlers. But give me a passage, and I will go up and call the schooner down to us in the turning of an hour glass."

The indolent soldier raised himself from the leaning posture he had taken against the door of the state-room, and Griffith proceeded through the dark ward-room, up the narrow stairs that led him to the principal battery of the ship, and thence, by another and broader flight of steps, to the open deck.

The gale still blew strong, but steadily; the blue water of the ocean was rising in mimic mountains, that were crowned with white foam, which the wind, at times, lifted from its kindred element, to propel in mist, through the air from summit to summit. But the ship rode on these agitated billows with an easy and regular movement, that denoted the skill with which her mechanical powers were directed. The day was bright and clear, and the lazy sun, who seemed unwilling to meet the toil of ascending to the meridian, was crossing the heavens with a southern incli-

ation, that hardly allowed him to temper the moist air of the ocean with his genial heat. At the distance of a mile directly at the wind's eye, the Ariel was seen, obeying the signal which had caused the dialogue we have related. Her low, black hull was barely discernible, at moments, when she rose to the crest of a larger wave than common; but the spot of canvass that she exposed to the wind, was to be seen, seeming to touch the water on either hand, as the little vessel rolled amid the seas. At times she was entirely hid from view, when the faint lines of her raking mast would be again discovered, issuing, as it were, from the ocean, and continuing to ascend, until the hull itself would appear, thrusting its bows into the air, surrounded by foam, and apparently ready to take its flight into another element.

After dwelling a moment on the beautiful sight we have attempted to discribe, Griffith cast his eyes upward, to examine, with the keenness of a seaman, the disposition of things aloft, and then turned his attention to those who were on the deck of the frigate.

His commander stood, in his composed manner, patiently waiting the execution of his order by the Ariel, and the deck was paced by the stranger who had so recently taken

such a conspicuous part in the management of the ship. Griffith availed himself of daylight and his situation, to examine the appearance of this singular being more closely than the darkness and confusion of the preceding night had allowed. He was a trifle below the middle size in stature, but his form was muscular and athletic, exhibiting the finest proportions of manly beauty. His face appeared rather characterized by melancholy and thought, than by that determined decision which he had so powerfully displayed in the moments of their most extreme danger; but Griffith well knew that it could also exhibit looks of the fiercest impatience. At present, it appeared to the curious youth, when compared to the glimpses he had caught by the lights of their lanterns, like the ocean at rest, contrasted with the waters around him. The eyes of the pilot rested on the deck, or when they did wander, it was with uneasy and rapid glances. The large pee-jacket, that concealed most of his other attire, was as roughly made, and of materials as coarse, as that worn by the meanest seaman in the vessel; and yet, it did not escape the inquisitive gaze of the young lieutenant, that it was worn with an air of neatness and care that was altogether unusual in men of his profession. The examination of Griffith ended here, for the near approach of the Ariel attracted the attention of all on the deck of the frigate, to the conversation that was about to pass between their respective commanders.

As the little schooner rolled along under their stern, Captain Munson directed his subordinate to leave his vessel, and repair on board the ship. As soon as the order was received, the Ariel rounded-to, and drawing ahead into the smooth water occasioned by the huge fabric that protected her from the gale, the whale-boat was again launched from her decks, and manned by the same crew that had landed on those shores which were now faintly discerned far to leeward, looking like blue clouds on the skirts of the ocean.

When Barnstable had entered his boat, a few strokes of the oars sent it, dancing over the waves, to the side of the ship. The little vessel was then veered off, to a distance, where it rode in safety, under the care of a boat-keeper, and the officer and his men ascended the side of the lofty frigate.

The usual ceremonials of reception were rigidly observed by Griffith and his juniors, when Barnstable touched the deck; and though every hand was ready to be extended towards the reckless seamen, none presumed to exceed the salutations of official decorum, until a short and private dialogue had taken place between him and their captain.

In the mean time, the crew of the whale-boat passed forward, and mingled with the seamen of the frigate, with the

exception of the cockswain, who established himself in one of the gangways, where he stood in the utmost composure, fixing his eyes aloft, and shaking his head, in evident dissatisfaction, as he studied the complicated mass of rigging above him. The spectacle soon attracted to his side some half-dozen youths, with Mr. Merry at their head, who endeavoured to entertain their guest in a manner that should most conduce to the indulgence of their own waggish propensities.

The conversation between Barnstable and his superior soon ended; when the former, beckoning to Griffith, passed the wondering group who had collected around the capstern, awaiting his leisure to greet him more cordially, and led the way to the ward-room, with the freedom of one who felt himself no stranger. As this unsocial manner formed no part of the natural temper or ordinary deportment of the man, the remainder of the officers suffered their first lieutenant to follow him alone, believing that duty required that their interview should be private. Barnstable was determined that it should be so, at all events; for he seized the lamp from the mess-table, and entered the state-room of his friend, closing the door behind them, and turning the key. When they were both within its narrow limits—pointing to the only chair the little apartment contained, with a sort of instinctive

deference to his companion's rank—the commander of the schooner threw himself carelessly on a sea-chest, and, placing the lamp on the table, he opened the discourse as follows :—

"What a night we had of it! twenty times I thought I could see the sea breaking over you, and I had given you over as drowned men, or, what is worse, as men driven ashore, to be led to the prison-ships of these islanders, when I saw your lights in answer to my gun. Had you hoisted the conscience out of a murderer, you wouldn't have relieved him more than you did me, by showing that bit of tallow and cotton, tip'd with flint and steel. But, Griffith, I have a tale to tell of a different kind"—

"Of how you slept, when you found yourself in deep water, and how your crew strove to outdo their commander, and how all succeeded so well, that there was a grey-head on board here, that began to shake with displeasure," interrupted Griffith; "truly, Dick, you will get into lubberly habits on board that bubble in which you float about, where all hands go to sleep as regularly as the inhabitants of a poultry yard go to roost."

"Not so bad, nor half so bad, Ned," returned the other

laughing; "I keep as sharp a discipline as if we wore a flag. To be sure, forty men can't make as much parade as three or four hundred; but as for making or taking in sail, I am your better any day."

"Ay, because a pocket handkerchief is sooner opened and shut than a table-cloth. But I hold it to be unseaman like to leave any vessel without human eyes, and those open, to watch whether she goes east or west, north or south."

"And who is guilty of such a dead-man's watch?"

"Why, they say on board here, that when it blows hard, you seat the man you call long Tom by the side of the tiller, tell him to keep her head to sea, and then pipe all hands to their night-caps, where you all remain, comfortable stowed in your hammocks, until you are awakened by the snoring of your helmsman."

"'Tis a damned scandalous insinuation," cried Barnstable, with an indignation that he in vain attempted to conceal. "Who gives currency to such a libel, Mr. Griffith?"

"I had it of the marine," said his friend, losing the archness that had instigated him to worry his companion, in the vacant air of one who was careless of everything; "but I

don't believe half of it myself—I have no doubt you all had your eyes open last night, whatever you might have been about this morning."

"Ah! this morning! there was an oversight, indeed. But I was studying a new signal-book, Griffith, that has a thousand times more interest for me than all the bunting you can show, from the head to the heel of your masts."

"What! have you found out the Englishman's private talk?"

"No, no," said the other, stretching forth his hand and grasping the arm of his friend. "I met, last night, one on those cliffs, who has proved herself what I always believed her to be and loved her for, a girl of quick thought and bold spirit."

"Of whom do you speak?"

"Of Katherine"—

Griffith started from his chair involuntarily, at the sound of this name, and the blood passed quickly through the shades of his countenance, leaving it now pale as death, and

then burning as if oppressed by a torrent from his heart. Struggling to overcome an emotion which he appeared ashamed to betray even to the friend he most loved, the young man soon recovered himself so far as to resume his seat, when he asked, gloomily—

"Was she alone?"

"She was; but she left with me this paper, and this invaluable book, which is worth a library of all other works."

The eye of Griffith rested vacantly on the treasure that the other valued so highly, but his hand seized eagerly the open letter which was laid on the table for his perusal. The reader will at once understand, that it was in the handwriting of a female, and that it was the communication Barnstable had received from his betrothed, on the cliffs. Its contents were as follows:—

"Believing that Providence may conduct me where we shall meet, or whence I may be able to transmit to you this account, I have prepared a short statement of the situation of Cecilia Howard and myself; not, however, to urge you and Griffith to any rash or foolish hazards, but that you may both sit down, and after due consultation determine on what is proper for our relief.

"By this time, you must understand the character of Colonel Howard too well to expect he will ever consent to give his niece to a rebel. He has already sacrificed to his loyalty, as he calls it, (but I whisper to Cecilia, 'tis his treason,) not only his native country, but no small part of his fortune also. In the frankness of my disposition, (you know my frankness, Barnstable, but too well!) I confessed to him, after the defeat of the mad attempt Griffith made to carry off Cecilia, in Carolina, that I had been foolish enough to enter into some weak promise to the brother officer who had accompanied the young sailor in his traitorous visits to the plantation. Heigho! I sometimes think it would have been better for us all, if your ship had never been chased into the river, or, after she was there, if Griffith had made no attempt to renew his acquaintance with my cousin. The colonel received the intelligence as such a guardian would hear that his ward was about to throw away thirty thousand dollars and herself on a traitor to his king and country. I defended you stoutly: said that you had no king, as the tie was dissolved; that America was your country, and that your profession was honourable; but it would not all do. He called you a rebel; that I was used to. He said you were a traitor; that, in his vocabulary, amounts to the same thing. He even hinted that you were a coward; and that I knew to be false, and did not hesitate to tell him so. He used fifty opprobri-

ous terms that I cannot remember, but among others were the beautiful epithets of 'disorganizer,' 'leveller,' 'democrat,' and 'jacobite.' (I hope he did not mean a monk.) In short, he acted Colonel Howard in a rage. But as his dominion does not, like that of his favourite kings, continue from generation to generation, and one short year will release me from his power, and leave me mistress of my own actions. that is, if your fine promises are to be believed, I bore it all very well, being resolved to suffer any thing but martyrdom, rather than abandon Cecilia. She, dear girl, has much more to distress her than I can have; she is not only the ward of Colonel Howard, but his niece and his sole heir. I am persuaded this latter circumstance makes no difference in either her conduct or her feelings, but he appears to think it gives him a right to tyrannize over her on all occasions. After all Colonel Howard is a gentleman, when you do not put him in a passion, and, I believe, a thoroughly honest man, and Cecilia even loves him. But a man who is driven from his country, in his sixtieth year, with the loss of nearly half his fortune, is not apt to canonize those who compel the change.

"It seems that when the Howards lived on this island, a hundred years ago, they dwelt in the county of Northumberland. Hither, then, he brought us, when political events, and his dread of becoming the uncle to a rebel, induced him

to abandon America, as he says, for ever. We have been here now three months, and for two-thirds of that time we lived in tolerable comfort; but latterly, the papers have announced the arrival of the ship and your schooner in France, and from that moment as strict a watch has been kept over us, as if we had meditated a renewal of the Carolina flight. The colonel, on his arrival here, hired an old building, that is part house, part abbey, part castle, and all prison, because it is said to have once belonged to an ancestor of his. In this delightful dwelling there are many cages, that will secure more uneasy birds than we are. About a fortnight ago an alarm was given in a neighbouring village, which is situated on the shore, that two American vessels, answering your description, had been seen hovering along the coast; and, as the people in this quarter dream of nothing but that terrible fellow Paul Jones, it was said that he was on board one of them. But I believe that Colonel Howard suspects who you really are. He was very minute in his inquiries, I hear; and since then, has established a sort of garrison in the house, under the pretence of defending it against marauders, like those who are said to have laid my Lady Selkirk under contribution.

"Now, understand me, Barnstable; on no account would I have you risk yourself on shore; neither must there be

blood spilt, if you love me; but that you may know what sort of a place we are confined in, and by whom surrounded, I will describe both our prison and the garrison. The whole building is of stone, and not to be attempted with slight means. It has windings and turnings, both internally and externally, that would require more skill than I possess to make intelligible; but the rooms we inhabit are in the upper or third floor of a wing, that you may call a tower, if you are in a romantic mood, but which, in truth, is nothing but a wing. Would to God I could fly with it! If any accident should bring you in sight of the dwelling, you will know our rooms by the three smoky vanes that whiffle about its pointed roof, and also by the windows in that story being occasionally open. Opposite to our windows, at the distance of half a mile, is a retired, unfrequented ruin, concealed, in a great measure, from observation by a wood, and affording none of the best accommodations, it is true, but shelter in some of its vaults or apartments. I have prepared, according to the explanations you once gave me on this subject, a set of small signals, of differently coloured silks, and a little dictionary of all the phrases that I could imagine as useful to refer to, properly numbered to correspond with the key and the flags, all of which I shall send you with this letter. You must prepare your own flags, and of course I retain mine, as well as a copy of the key and book. If opportunity should ever offer, we

can have, at least, a pleasant discourse together; you from the top of the old tower in the ruins, and I from the east window of my dressing-room! But now for the garrison. In addition to the commandant, Colonel Howard, who retains all the fierceness of his former military profession, there is, as his second in authority, that bane of Cecilia's happiness, Kit Dillon, with his long Savannah face, scornful eyes of black, and skin of the same colour. This gentleman, you know, is a distant relative of the Howards, and wishes to be more nearly allied. He is poor, it is true, but then, as the colonel daily remarks, he is a good and loyal subject, and no rebel. When I ask why he was not in arms in these stirring times, contending for the prince he loves so much, the colonel answers it is not his profession, that he has been educated for the law, and was destined to fill one of the highest judicial stations in the colonies, and that he hoped he should yet live to see him sentence certain nameless gentlemen to condign punishment. This was consoling, to be sure; but I bore it. However, he left Carolina with us, and here he is, and here he is likely to continue, unless you can catch him, and anticipate his judgment on himself. This gentleman the colonel has long desired to see the husband of Cecilia, and since the news of your being on the coast, the siege has nearly amounted to a storm. The consequences are, that

my cousin at first kept her room, and then the colonel kept her there,and even now she is precluded from leaving the wing we inhabit. In addition to these two principal jailors, we have four men servants, two black, and two white; and an officer and twenty soldiers from a neighbouring town are billetted on us, by particular desire, until the coast is declared free from pirates! yes, that is the musical name they give you—and when their own people land, and plunder, and rob, and murder the men, and insult the women, they are called heroes! It's a fine thing to be able to invent names and make dictionaries—and it must be your fault, if mine has been framed for no purpose. I declare when I recollect all the insulting and cruel things I hear in this country of my own and her people, it makes me lose my temper, and forget my sex; but do not let my ill humour urge you to anything rash; remember your life, remember their prisons, remember your reputation, but do not, do not forget your

KATHERINE PLOWDEN.

"P. S. I had almost forgotten to tell you, that in the signal-book you will find a more particular description of our prison, where it stands, and a drawing of the grounds, &c.'

When Griffith concluded this epistle, he returned it to the

man to whom it was addressed, and fell back in his chair, in an attitude that denoted deep reflection.

"I knew she was here, or I should have accepted the command offered to me by our commissioners in Paris," he at length uttered; "and I thought that some lucky chance might throw her in my way; but this is bringing us close, indeed! This intelligence must be acted on, and that promptly. Poor girl, what does she not suffer in such a situation!"

"What a beautiful hand she writes!" exclaimed Barnstable; "'tis as clear, and as pretty, and as small, as her own delicate fingers. Griff., what a log-book she would keep!"

"Cecilia Howard touch the coarse leaves of a log-book!" cried the other in amazement; but perceiving Barnstable to be poring over the contents of his mistress's letter, he smiled at their mutual folly, and continued silent. After a short time spent in cool reflection, Griffith required of his friend the nature and circumstances of his interview with Katherine Plowden. Barnstable related it, briefly, as it occurred, in a manner already known to the reader.

"Then," said Griffith, "Merry is the only one, besides ourselves, who knows of this meeting, and he will be too chary of the reputation of his kinswoman to mention it."

"Her reputation needs no shield, Mr. Griffith," cried her lover; "'tis as spotless as the canvass above your head, and—

"Peace, dear Richard; I entreat your pardon; my words may have conveyed more than I intended; but it is important that our measures should be secret, as well as prudently concerted."

"We must get them both off," returned Barnstable, forgetting his displeasure the moment it was exhibited, "and that too before the old man takes it into his wise head to leave the coast. Did you ever get a sight of his instructions, or does he keep silent?"

"As the grave. This is the first time we have left port, that he has not conversed freely with me on the nature of the cruise; but not a syllable has been exchanged between us on the subject, since we sailed from Brest."

"Ah! that is your Jersey bashfulness," said Barnstable;

"wait till I come alongside him, with my eastern curiosity, and I pledge myself to get it out of him in an hour."

"'Twill be diamond cut diamond, I doubt," said Griffith, laughing; "you will find him as acute at evasion, as you can possibly be at a cross-examination."

"At any rate he gives me a chance to-day; you know, I suppose, that he sent for me to attend a consultation of his officers on important matters."

"I did not," returned Griffith, fixing his eye intently on the speaker; "what has he to offer?"

"Nay, that you must ask your pilot; for while talking to me, the old man would turn and look at the stranger, every minute, as if watching for signals how to steer."

"There is a mystery about that man, and our connexion with him, that I cannot fathom," said Griffith. "But I hear the voice of Manual calling for me; we are wanted in the cabin. Remember, you do not leave the ship without seeing me again."

"No, no, my dear fellow, from the public we must retire to another private consultation."

The young men arose, and Griffith throwing off the round-about in which he had appeared on the deck, drew on a coat of more formal appearance, and taking a sword carelessly in his hand, they proceeded together along the passage already described, to the gun-deck, where they entered with the proper ceremonials, into the principal cabin of the frigate.

CHAPTER VII.

"Sempronius, speak."

Cato.

THE arrangements for the consultation were brief and simple. The veteran commander of the frigate received his officers with punctilious respect, and pointing to the chairs that were placed around the table, which was a fixture in the centre of his cabin, he silently seated himself, and his example was followed by all, without further ceremony. In taking their stations, however, a quiet, but rigid observance was paid to the rights of seniority and rank. On the right of the Captain was placed Griffith, as next in authority; and opposite to him was seated the commander of the schooner. The officer of marines, who was included in the number, held the next station in point of precedence, the same order being observed to the bottom of the table, which was occupied by a hard-featured, square-built, athletic man, who held the

office of sailing-master. When order was restored, after the short interruption of taking their places, the officer who had required the advice of his inferiors, opened the business on which he demanded their opinions.

"My instructions direct me, gentlemen," said he, "after making the coast of England, to run the land down—"

The hand of Griffith was elevated respectfully for silence, and the veteran paused, with a look that inquired the reason of his interruption.

"We are not alone," said the lieutenant, glancing his eye towards the part of the cabin where the pilot stood, leaning on one of the guns, in an attitude of easy indulgence.

The stranger moved not at this direct hint; neither did his eye change from its close survey of a chart that lay near him on the deck. The captain dropped his voice to tones of cautious respect, as he replied—

"'Tis only Mr. Gray. His services will be necessary on the occasion, and therefore nothing need be concealed from him."

Glances of surprise were exchanged among the young men, but Griffith bowing his silent acquiescence in the decision of his superior, the latter proceeded—

"I was ordered to watch for certain signals from the headlands that we made, and was furnished with the best of charts, and such directions as enabled us to stand into the bay we entered last night. We have now obtained a pilot, and one who has proved himself a skilful man; such a one, gentlemen, as no officer need hesitate to rely on, in any emergency, either on account of his integrity or his knowledge."

The veteran paused, and turned his looks on the countenances of the listeners, as if to collect their sentiments on this important point. Receiving no other reply than the one conveyed by the silent inclinations of the heads of his hearers, the commander resumed his explanations, referring to an open paper in his hand—

"It is known to you all, gentlemen, that the unfortunate question of retaliation has been much agitated between the two governments—our own, and that of the enemy. For this reason, and for certain political purposes, it has become an object of solicitude with our commissioners in Paris, to ob-

tain a few individuals of character, from the enemy, who may be held as a check on their proceedings, at the same time it brings the evils of war, from our own shores, home to those who have caused it. An opportunity now offers to put this plan in execution, and I have collected you, in order to consult on the means."

A profound silence succeeded this unexpected communication of the object of their cruise. After a short pause, their captain added, addressing himself to the sailing-master—

"What course would you advise me to pursue, Mr. Boltrope?"

The weather-beaten seaman who was thus called on to break through the difficulties of a knotty point, with his opinion, laid one of his short bony hands on the table, and began to twirl an inkstand with great industry, while with the other he conveyed a pen to his mouth, which was apparently masticated with all the relish that he could possibly have felt had it been a leaf from the famous Virginian weed. But perceiving that he was expected to answer, after looking first to his right hand, and then to his left, he spoke as follows, in a hoarse, thick voice, in which the fogs of the ocean seem-

ed to have united with sea-damps and colds, to destroy everything like melody—

"If this matter is ordered, it is to be done I suppose," he said; "for the old rule runs, 'obey orders, if you break owners;' though the maxim, which says, 'one hand for the owner, and t'other for yourself,' is quite as good, and has saved many a hearty fellow from a fall that would have balanced the purser's books. Not that I mean a purser's books are not as good as any other man's, but that when a man is dead, his account must be closed, or there will be a false muster. Well, if the thing is to be done, the next question is, how is it to be done? There is many a man that knows there is too much canvass on a ship, who can't tell how to shorten sail. Well, then, if the thing is really to be done, we must either land a gang to seize them, or we must show false lights, and sham colours, to lead them off to the ship. As for landing, Captain Munson, I can only speak for one man, and that is myself, which is to say, that if you run the ship with her jib-boom into the king of England's parlour windows, why, I'm consenting, nor do I care how much of his crockery is cracked in so doing; but as to putting the print of my foot on one of his sandy beaches, if I do, that is always speaking for only one man, and saving your presence, may I hope to be d——d."

The young men smiled as the tough old seaman uttered his sentiments so frankly, rising with his subject, to that which with him was the climax of all discussion; but his commander, who was but a more improved scholar from the same rough school, appeared to understand his arguments entirely, and without altering a muscle of his rigid countenance, he required the opinion of the junior lieutenant.

The young man spoke firmly, but modestly, though the amount of what he said was not much more distinct than that uttered by the master, and was very much to the same purpose, with the exception, that he appeared to entertain no personal reluctance to trusting himself on dry ground.

The opinions of the others grew gradually more explicit and clear as they ascended in the scale of rank, until it came to the turn of the captain of marines to speak. There was a trifling exhibition of professional pride about the soldier, in delivering his sentiments on a subject that embraced a good deal more of his peculiar sort of duty than ordinarily occurred in the usual operations of the frigate.

"It appears to me, sir, that the success of this expedition depends altogether upon the manner in which it is conducted." After this lucid opening, the soldier hesitated a moment, as

f to collect his ideas for a charge that should look down all opposition, and proceeded. "The landing, of course, will be effected on a fair beach, under cover of the frigate's guns, and could it be possibly done, the schooner should be anchored in such a manner as to throw in a flanking fire on the point of debarkation. The arrangements for the order of march must a good deal depend on the distance to go over; though I should think, sir, an advanced party of seamen, to act as pioneers for the column of marines, should be pushed a short distance in front, while the baggage and baggage-guard might rest upon the frigate, until the enemy was driven into the interior, when it could advance without danger. There should be flank-guards, under the orders of two of the oldest midshipmen; and a light corps might be formed of the top-men, to co-operate with the marines. Of course, sir, Mr. Griffith will lead, in person, the musket-men and boarders, armed with their long pikes, whom I presume he would hold in reserve, as I trust my military claims and experience entitle me to the command of the main body."

"Well done, field marshal!" cried Barnstable, with a glee that seldom regarded time or place; "you should never let salt water mould your buttons; but in Washington's camp, ay! and in Washington's tent, you should swing your hammock in future—Why, sir, do you think we are about to invade England?"

"I know that every military movement should be executed with precision, Captain Barnstable," returned the marine. "I am too much accustomed to hear the sneers of the sea-officers, to regard what I know proceeds from ignorance. If Captain Munson is disposed to employ me and my command in his expedition, I trust he will discover that marines are good for something more than to mount guard or pay salutes." Then, turning haughtily from his antagonist, he continued to address himself to their common superior, as if disdaining further intercourse with one who, from the nature of the case, must be unable to comprehend the force of what he said. "It will be prudent, Captain Munson, to send out a party to reconnoitre, before we march; and as it may be necessary to defend ourselves in case of a repulse, I would beg leave to recommend that a corps be provided with entrenching tools, to accompany the expedition. They would be extremely useful, sir, in assisting to throw up field-works, though, I doubt not, tools might be found in abundance in this country, and labourers impressed for the service, on an emergency—"

This was too much for the risibility of Barnstable, who broke forth in a burst of scornful laughter, which no one saw proper to interrupt; though Griffith, on turning his head, to conceal the smile that was gathering on his own face, perceived the fierce glance which the pilot threw at

the merry seaman, and wondered at its significance and impatience. When Captain Munson thought that the mirth of the lieutenant was concluded, he mildly desired his reasons for amusing himself so exceedingly with the plans of the marine.

"'Tis a chart for a campaign!" cried Barnstable, "and should be sent off express to Congress, before the Frenchmen are brought into the field!"

"Have you any better plan to propose, Mr. Barnstable?" inquired the patient commander.

"Better! ay, one that will take no time, and cause no trouble, to execute it," cried the other; "'tis a seaman's job, sir, and must be done with a seaman's means."

"Pardon me, Captain Barnstable," interrupted the marine, whose jocular vein was entirely absorbed in his military pride; "if there be service to be done on shore, I claim it as my right to be employed."

"Claim what you will, soldier, but how will you carry on the war with a parcel of fellows who don't know one end of a boat from the other," returned the reckless sailor. "Do

you think, that a barge or a cutter is to be beached in the same manner you ground firelock, by word of command? No, no, Captain Manual—I honour your courage, for I have seen it tried, but d——e if—"

"You forget, we wait for your project, Mr. Barnstable," said the veteran.

"I crave your patience, sir; but no project is necessary. Point out the bearings and distance of the place where the men you want are to be found, and I will take the heel of the gale, and run into the land, always speaking for good water and no rocks. Mr. Pilot, you will accompany me, for you carry as true a map of the bottom of these seas in your head as ever was made of dry ground. I will look out for good anchorage, or if the wind should blow off shore, let the schooner stand off and on, till we should be ready to take the broad sea again. I would land, out of my whale-boat, with long Tom and a boat's crew, and finding out the place you will describe, we shall go up, and take the men you want, and bring them aboard. It's all plain-sailing; though, as it is a well-peopled country, it may be necessary to do our shore work in the dark."

"Mr. Griffith, we only wait for your sentiments," pro-

ceeded the captain, "when, by comparing opinions, we may decide on the most prudent course."

The first lieutenant had been much absorbed in thought, during the discussion of the subject, and might have been, on that account, better prepared to give his opinion with effect. Pointing to the man who yet stood behind him, leaning on a gun, he commenced by asking—

"Is it your intention that man shall accompany the party?"

"It is."

"And from him you expect the necessary information, sir, to guide our movements?"

"You are altogether right."

"If, sir, he has but a moiety of the skill on the land that he possesses on the water, I will answer for his success," returned the lieutenant, bowing slightly to the stranger, who received the compliment by a cold inclination of his head. "I must desire the indulgence of both Mr. Barnstable and Captain Manual," he continued, "and claim the command as of right belonging to my rank."

"It belongs naturally to the schooner," exclaimed the impatient Barnstable.

"There may be enough for us all to do," said Griffith, elevating a finger to the other, in a manner, and with an impressive look, that was instantly comprehended. "I neither agree wholly with the one nor the other of these gentlemen. 'Tis said, that since our appearance on the coast, the dwellings of many of the gentry are guarded by small detachments of soldiers from the neighbouring towns."

"Who says it?" asked the pilot, advancing among them with a suddenness that caused a general silence.

"I say it, sir," returned the lieutenant, when the momemtary surprise had passed away.

"Can you vouch for it?"

"I can."

"Name a house, or an individual, that is thus protected."

Griffith gazed at the man who thus forgot himself in the midst of a consultation like the present, and yielding to his

native pride hesitated to reply. But, mindful of the declarations of his captain, and the recent services of the pilot, he at length said, with a little embarrassment of manner—

"I know it to be the fact, in the dwelling of a Colonel Howard, who resides but a few leagues to the north of us."

The stranger started at the name, and then raising his eye keenly to the face of the young man, appeared to study his thoughts in his varying countenance. But the action, and the pause that followed, were of short continuance. His lip slightly curled, whether in scorn, or with a concealed smile, would have been difficult to say, so closely did it resemble both, and as he dropped quietly back to his place at the gun, he said—

"'Tis more than probable you are right, sir; and if I might presume to advise Captain Munson, it would be to lay great weight on your opinion."

Griffith turned to see if he could comprehend more meaning in the manner of the stranger than his words expressed, but his face was again shaded by his hand, and his eyes were once more fixed on the chart with the same vacant abstraction as before.

"I have said, sir, that I agree wholly neither with Mr. Barnstable nor Captain Manual," continued the lieutenant, after a short pause. "The command of this party is mine, as the senior officer, and I must beg leave to claim it. I certainly do not think the preparation that Captain Manual advises necessary; neither would I undertake the duty with as little caution as Mr. Barnstable proposes. If there are soldiers to be encountered, we should have soldiers to oppose to them; but as it must be sudden boat work, and regular evolutions must give place to a seaman's bustle, a sea-officer should command. Is my request granted, Captain Munson?"

The veteran replied, without hesitation—

"It is, sir; it is my intention to offer you the service, and I rejoice to see you accept it so cheerfully."

Griffith with difficulty concealed the satisfaction with which he listened to his commander, and a radiant smile illumined his pale features, when he observed—

"With me then, sir, let the responsibility rest. I request that Captain Manual, with twenty men, may be put under my orders, if that gentleman does not dislike the duty." The marine bowed, and cast a glance of triumph at Barnstable. "I will take my own cutter, with her tried crew,

go on board the schooner, and when the wind lulls, we will run into the land, and then be governed by circumstances."

The commander of the schooner threw back the triumphant look of the marine, and exclaimed, in his joyous manner—

"'Tis a good plan, and done like a seaman, Mr. Griffith. Ay, ay, let the schooner be employed and if it be necessary, you shall see her anchored in one of their duck-ponds, with her broadside to bear on the parlour windows of the best house in the island. But twenty marines! they will cause a jam in my little craft."

"Not a man less than twenty would be prudent," returned Griffith. "More service may offer than we seek."

Barnstable well understood his allusion, but still he replied—

"Make it, seaman, and I will give you room for thirty. But these soldiers never know how to stow away their arms and legs, unless at a drill. One will take the room of two sailors; they swing their hammocks athwart-ships, heads to leeward, and then turn out wrong end uppermost at the call.

Why, damn it, sir, the chalk and rotten-stone of twenty soldiers will choak my hatches!"

"Give me the launch, Captain Munson!" exclaimed the indignant marine, "and we will follow Mr. Griffith in an open boat, rather than put Captain Barnstable to so much inconvenience."

"No, no, Manual," cried the other, extending his muscular arm across, the table, with an open palm, to the soldier; "you would all become so many Jonahs in uniform, and I doubt whether the fish could digest your cartridge-boxes and bayonet belts. You shall go with me, and learn, with your own eyes, whether we keep the cat's-watch aboard the Ariel that you joke about."

The laugh was general at the expense of the soldier, if we except the pilot and the commander of the frigate. The former was a silent, and apparently an abstracted, but in reality a deeply interested listener to the discourse; and there were moments when he bent his looks on the speakers, as if he sought more in their characters than was exhibited by the gay trifling of the moment. Captain Munson seldom allowed a muscle of his wrinkled features to disturb their repose; and if he had not the real dignity to repress the

untimely mirth of his officers, he had too much good nature to wish to disturb their harmless enjoyments. He expressed himself satisfied with the proposed arrangements, and beckoned to his steward to place before them the usual beverage, with which all their consultations concluded.

The sailing-master appeared to think that the same order was to be observed in their potations as in council, and helping himself to an allowance which retained its hue even in its diluted state, he first raised it to the light, and then observed—

"This ship's water is nearly the colour of rum itself; if it only had its flavour, what a hearty set of dogs we should be. Mr. Griffith, I find you are willing to haul your land-tacks aboard. Well its natural for youth to love the earth; but there is one man, and he is sailing-master of this ship, who saw land enough last night, to last him a twelvemonth. But if you will go, here's a good land-fall, and a better offing to you. Captain Munson, my respects to you. I say, sir, if we should keep the ship more to the south'ard, its my opinion, and that's but one man's, we should fall in with some of the enemy's homeward-bound West-Indiamen, and find wherewithal to keep the life in us when we see fit to go on shore ourselves."

As the tough old sailor made frequent application of the glass to his mouth with the one hand, and kept a firm hold of the decanter with the other, during this speech, his companions were compelled to listen to his eloquence, or depart with their thirst unassuaged. Barnstable, however, quite coolly dispossessed the tar of the bottle, and mixing for himself a more equal potation observed in the act—

"That is the most remarkable glass of grog you have, Boltrope, that I ever sailed with; it draws as little water as the Ariel, and is as hard to find the bottom. If your spirit-room enjoys the same sort of engine to replenish it, as you pump out your rum, Congress will sail this frigate cheaply."

The other officers helped themselves with still greater moderation, Griffith barely moistening his lips, and the pilot rejecting the offered glass altogether. Captain Munson continued standing, and his officers, perceiving that their presence was no longer necessary, bowed and took their leave. As Griffith was retiring last, he felt a hand laid lightly on his shoulder, and turning, perceived that he was detained by the pilot.

"Mr. Griffith," he said, when they were quite alone with

the commander of the frigate, "the occurrences of the last night should teach us confidence in each other; without it we go on a dangerous and fruitless errand."

"Is the hazard equal?" returned the youth. "I am known to all to be the man I seem—am in the service of my country—belong to a family and enjoy a name, that is a pledge for my loyalty to the cause of America—and yet I trust myself on hostile ground, in the midst of enemies, with a weak arm, and under circumstances where treachery would prove my ruin. Who and what is the man that thus enjoys your confidence, Captain Munson? I ask the question less for myself than for the gallant men who will fearlessly follow wherever I lead."

A shade of dark displeasure crossed the features of the stranger, at one part of this speech, and at its close he sunk into deep thought. The commander, however replied—

"There is a show of reason in your question, Mr. Griffith—and yet you are not the man to be told that implicit obedience is what I have a right to expect. I have not your pretensions, sir, by birth or education, and yet Congress have not seen proper to overlook my years and services. I command this frigate—"

"Say no more," interrupted the pilot. "There is reason in his doubts, and they shall be appeased. I like the proud and fearless eye of the young man and while he dreads a gibbet from my hands, I will show him how to repose a noble confidence. Read this, sir, and tell me if you distrust me now?"

While the stranger spoke, he thrust his hand into the bosom of his dress, and drew forth a parchment decorated with ribands and bearing a massive seal, which he opened, and laid on the table before the youth. As he pointed with his finger impressively, to different parts of the writing, his eye kindled with a look of unusual fire, and there was a faint tinge discernible on his pallid features when he spoke.

"See!" he said, "royalty itself does not hesitate to bear witness in my favour, and that is not a name to occasion dread to an American."

Griffith gazed with wonder at the fair signature of the unfortunate Louis, which graced the bottom of the parchment; but when his eyes obeyed the signal of the stranger and rested on the body of the instrument, he started back from the table, and fixed his animated eyes on the pilot, he

cried, while a glow of fiery courage flitted across his countenance—

"Lead on! I'll follow you to death!"

A smile of gratified exultation struggled around the lips of the stranger, who took the arm of the young man, and led him into a state-room leaving the commander of the frigate, standing in his unmoved and quiet manner, a spectator of, but hardly an actor in the scene.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Fierce bounding, forward sprung the ship
Like grayhound starting from the slip,
To seize his flying prey."

Lord of the Isles.

Although the subject of the consultation remained a secret with those whose opinions were required, yet enough of the result leaked out among the subordinate officers, to throw the whole crew into a state of eager excitement. The rumour spread itself along the decks of the frigate, with the rapidity of an alarm, that an expedition was to attempt the shore on some hidden service, dictated by the Congress itself; and conjectures were made respecting its force and destination, with all that interest which might be imagined would exist among the men whose lives or liberties were to abide the

issue. A gallant and reckless daring, mingled with the desire of novelty, however, was the prevailing sentiment among the crew, who would have received with cheers the intelligence that their vessel was commanded to force the passage of the united British fleet. A few of the older and more prudent of the sailors were exceptions to this thoughtless hardihood, and one or two, among whom the cockswain of the whale-boat was the most conspicuous, ventured to speak doubtingly of all sorts of land service, as being of a nature never to be attempted by seamen.

Captain Manual had his men paraded in the weather-gangway, and after a short address, calculated to inflame their military ardour and patriotism, acquainted them that he required twenty volunteers, which was in truth half their number, for a dangerous service. After a short pause, the company stepped forward, like one man, and announced themselves as ready to follow him to the end of the world. The marine cast a look over his shoulder at this gratifying declaration, in quest of Barnstable; but observing that the sailor was occupied with some papers, on a distant part of the quarter-deck, he proceeded to make a most impartial division among the candidates for glory; taking care at the same time, to cull his company in such a manner as to give

himself the flower of his men, and, consequently, to leave the ship the refuse.

While this arrangement was taking place, and the crew of the frigate was in this state of excitement, Griffith ascended to the deck, his countenance flushed with unusual enthusiasm, and his eyes beaming with a look of animation and gaiety, that had long been strangers to the face of the young man. He was giving forth the few necessary orders to the seamen he was to take with him from the ship, when Barnstable again motioned him to follow, and led the way once more to the state-room.

"Let the wind blow its pipe out," said the commander of the Ariel, when they were seated; "there will be no landing on the eastern coast of England till the sea goes down. But this Kate was made for a sailor's wife! See, Griffith, what a set of signals she has formed, out of her own cunning head."

"I hope your opinion may prove true, and that you may be the happy sailor who is to wed her," returned the other. "The girl has indeed discovered surprising art in this business! where could she have learnt the method and system so well?"

"Where! why, where she learnt better things; how to prize a whole-hearted seaman, for instance. Do you think that my tongue was jammed in my mouth, all the time we used to sit by the side of the river in Carolina, and that we found nothing to talk about!"

"Did you amuse your mistress with treatises on the art of navigation, and the science of signals?" said Griffith, smiling.

"I answered her questions, Mr. Griffith, as any civil man would to a woman he loved. The girl has as much curiosity as one of my own townswomen who has weathered cape forty without a husband, and her tongue goes like a dog-vane in a calm, first one way then another. But here is her dictionary. Now own, Griff., in spite of your college learning and sentimentals, that a woman of ingenuity and cleverness is a very good sort of a helpmate."

"I never doubted the merits of Miss Plowden," said the other, with a droll gravity that often mingled with his deeper feelings, the result of a sailor's habits, blended with native character. "But this indeed surpasses all my expectations! Why, she has, in truth made a most judicious selection of

phrases. 'No, 168.****indelible;' '169.****end only with life;' '170.**** I fear yours misleads me;' '171.—' "

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Barnstable, snatching the book from before the laughing eyes of Griffith; "what folly, to throw away our time now on such nonsense. What think you of this expedition to the land?"

"That it may be the means of rescuing the ladies, though it fail in making the prisoners we anticipate."

"But this pilot! you remember that he holds us by our necks, and can run us all up to the yard-arm of some English ship, whenever he chooses to open his throat at their threats or bribes."

"It would have been better that he should have cast the ship ashore, when he had her entangled in the shoals; it would have been our last thought to suspect him of treachery then," returned Griffith. "I follow him with confidence, and must believe that we are safer with him than we should be without him."

"Let him lead to the dwelling of his fox-hunting ministers of state," cried Barnstable, thrusting his book of signals

into his bosom; "but here is a chart that will show us the way to the port we wish to find. Let my foot once more touch terra firma, and you may write craven against my name, if that laughing vixen slips her cable before my eyes, and shoots into the wind's eye again, like a flying-fish chased by a dolphin. Mr. Griffith, we must have the chaplain with us to the shore."

"The madness of love is driving you into the errors of the soldier. Would you lie-by to hear sermons, with a flying party like ours?"

"Nay, nay, we must lay-to for nothing that is not unavoidable; but there are so many tacks in such a chase, when one has time to breathe, that we might as well spend our leisure in getting that fellow to splice us together. He has a handy way with a prayer-book, and could do the job as well as a bishop; and I should like to be able to say, that this is the last time these two saucy names, which are written at the bottom of this letter, should ever be seen sailing in the company of each other.

"It will not do," said his friend, shaking his head, and endeavouring to force a smile which his feelings suppressed; "it will not do, Richard; we must yield our own inclina-

tions to the service of our country; nor is this pilot a man who will consent to be led from his purpose."

"Then let him follow his purpose alone," cried Barnstable. "There is no human power, always saving my superior officer, that shall keep me from throwing abroad these tiny signals, and having a private talk with my dark-eyed Kate. But for a paltry pilot! he may luff and bear away as he pleases, while I shall steer as true as a magnet for that old ruin, where I can bring my eyes to bear on that romantic wing and three smokey vanes. Not that I'll forget my duty; no, I'll help you to catch the Englishmen; but when that is done, hey! for Katherine Plowden and my true love!"

"Hush, mad-cap! the ward-room holds long ears, and our bulk-heads grow thin by wear. I must keep you and myself to our duty. This is no children's game that we play; it seems the commissioners at Paris have thought proper to employ a frigate in the sport."

Barnstable's gaiety was a little repressed by the grave manner of his companion; but, after reflecting a moment, he started on his feet, and made the usual movements for departure.

"Whither?" asked Griffith, gently detaining his impatient friend.

"To old Moderate; I have a proposal to make that may remove every difficulty."

"Name it to me, then; I am in his council, and may save you the trouble and mortification of a refusal."

"How many of those gentry does he wish to line his cabin with?"

"The pilot has named no less than six, all men of rank and consideration with the enemy. Two of them are peers, two more belong to the commons' house of parliament, one is a general, and the sixth, like ourselves, is a sailor, and holds the rank of captain. They muster at a hunting-seat near the coast, and believe me, the scheme is not without its plausibility."

"Well, then, there are two a-piece for us. You follow the pilot, if you will; but let me sheer off for this dwelling of Colonel Howard, with my cockswain and boat's-crew. I will surprise his house, release the ladies, and on my way

back, lay my hands on two of the first lords I fall in with. I suppose, for our business, one is as good as another."

Griffith could not repress a faint laugh, while he replied—

"Though they are said to be each other's peers, there is, I believe, some difference even in the quality of lords. England might thank us for ridding her of some among them. Neither are they to be found, like beggars, under every hedge. No, no, the men we seek, must have something better than their nobility to recommend them to our favour. But let us examine more closely into this plan and map of Miss Plowden; something may occur, that shall yet bring the place within our circuit, like a contingent duty of the cruise."

Barnstable relunctantly relinquished his own wild plan, to the more sober judgment of his friend, and they passed an hour together, inquiring into the practicability, and consulting on the means, of making their public duty subserve the purposes of their private feelings.

The gale continued to blow heavily, during the whole of that morning; but towards noon, the usual indications of better weather became apparent. During these few hours

of inaction in the frigate, the marines, who were drafted for service on the land, moved through the vessel with a busy and stirring air, as if they were about to participate in the glory and danger of the campaign their officer had planned, while the few seamen who were to accompany the expedition steadily paced the deck, with their hands thrust into the bosoms of their neat blue jackets, or occasionally stretched towards the horizon, as their fingers traced, for their less experienced shipmates, the signs of an abatement in the gale among the driving clouds. The last lagger among the soldiers had appeared with his knapsack on his back in the lee-gangway, where his comrades were collected, armed, and accoutered for the strife, when Captain Munson ascended to the quarter-deck, accompanied by the stranger and his first lieutenant. A word was spoken by the latter in a low voice to a midshipman, who skipped gaily along the deck, and presently the shrill call of the boatswain was heard, preceding the hoarse cry of—

"Away there, you tigers, away!"

A smart roll of the drum followed, and the marines paraded, while the six seamen who belonged to the cutter that owned so fierce a name, made their preparations for lowering their little bark from the quarter of the frigate into the

troubled sea. Everything was conducted in the most exact order, and with a coolness and skill that bid defiance to the turbulence of the angry elements. The marines were safely transported from the ship to the schooner, under the favouring shelter of the former, though the boat appeared, at times, to be seeking the cavities of the ocean, and again, to be riding in the clouds, as she passed from one vessel to the other.

At length it was announced that the cutter was ready to receive the officers of the party. The pilot walked aside, and held private discourse, for a few moments, with the commander, who listened to his sentences with marked and singular attention. When their conference was ended, the veteran bared his grey head to the blasts, and offered his hand to the other, with a seaman's frankness, mingled with the deference of an inferior. The compliment was courteously returned by the stranger, who turned quickly on his heel, and directed the attention of those who awaited his movements, by a significant gesture, to the gangway.

"Come, gentlemen, let us go," said Griffith, starting from a reverie, and bowing his hasty compliments to his brethren in arms.

When it appeared that his superiors were ready to enter the boat, the boy, who, by nautical courtesy, was styled Mr. Merry, and who had been ordered to be in readiness, sprang over the side of the frigate, and glided into the cutter, with the activity of a squirrel. But the captain of marines paused, and cast a meaning glance at the pilot, whose place it was to precede him. The stranger, as he lingered on the deck, was examining the aspect of the heavens, and seemed unconscious of the expectations of the soldier, who gave vent to his impatience, after a moment's detention, by saying—

"We wait for you, Mr. Gray."

Aroused by the sound of his name, the pilot glanced his quick eye on the speaker, but, instead of advancing, he gently bent his body, as he again signed towards the gangway with his hand. To the astonishment, not only of the soldier, but of all who witnessed this breach of naval etiquette, Griffith bowed low, and entered the boat with the same promptitude as if he were preceding an admiral. Whether the stranger became conscious of his want of courtesy, or was too indifferent to surrounding objects to note occurrences, he immediately followed himself, leaving to the marine the post of honour. The latter, who was distinguished for his skill in all matters of naval or military

etiquette, thought proper to apologize, at a fitting time, to the first lieutenant, for suffering his senior officer to precede him into a boat, but never failed to show a becoming exultation, when he recounted the circumstance, by dwelling on the manner in which he had brought down the pride of the haughty pilot.

Barnstable had been several hours on board his little vessel, which was in every way prepared for their reception; and as soon as the heavy cutter of the frigate was hoisted on her deck, he announced that the schooner was ready to proceed. It has been already intimated, that the Ariel belonged to the smallest class of sea vessels, and as the symmetry of her construction reduced even that size in appearance, she was peculiarly well adapted to the sort of service in which she was about to be employed. Notwithstanding her lightness rendered her nearly as buoyant as cork, and at times she actually seemed to ride on the foam, her low decks were perpetually washed by the heavy seas that dashed against her frail sides, and she tossed and rolled in the hollows of the waves, in a manner that compelled even the practised seamen who trod her decks to move with guarded steps. Still she was trimmed and cleared with an air of nautical neatness and attention that afforded the utmost possible room for her dimensions; and though in

miniature, she wore the trappings of war as proudly as if the metal she bore was of a more fatal and dangerous character. The murderous gun, which, since the period of which we are writing, has been universally adopted in all vessels of inferior size, was then in the infancy of its invention, and was known to the American mariner only by reputation, under the appalling name of a "smasher." Of a vast caliber, though short, and easily managed, its advantages were even in that early day beginning to be appreciated and the largest ships were thought to be unusually well provided with the means of defence, when they carried two or three cannon of this formidable invention among their armament. At a later day this weapon has been improved and altered, until its use has become general in vessels of a certain size, taking its appellation from the Carron, on the banks of which river it was first moulded. In place of these carronades, six light brass cannon were firmly lashed to bulwarks of the Ariel, their brazen throats blackened by the sea-water, which so often broke harmlessly over these engines of destruction. In the centre of the vessel, between her two masts, a gun of the same metal, but of nearly twice the length of the others, was mounted on a carriage of a new and singular construction, which admitted of its being turned in any direction, so as to be of service in most of the emergencies that occur in naval warfare.

The eye of the pilot examined this armament closely, and then turned to the well-ordered decks, the neat and compact rigging, and the hardy faces of the fine young crew, with manifest satisfaction. Contrary to what had been his practice during the short time he had been with them, he uttered his gratification of them freely and aloud.

"You have a tight boat, Mr. Barnstable," he said, "and a gallant looking crew. You promise good service, sir, in time of need, and that hour may not be far distant."

"The sooner the better," returned the reckless sailor; "I have not had an opportunity of scaling my guns since we quitted Brest, though we passed several of the enemy's cutters coming up channel, with whom our bull-dogs longed for a conversation. Mr. Griffith will tell you, pilot, that my little sixes can speak, on occasion, with a voice nearly as loud as the frigate's eighteens."

"But not to as much purpose," observed Griffith; "'vox et preterea nihil,' as we said at the school."

"I know nothing of your Greek and Latin, Mr. Griffith," retorted the commander of the Ariel; "but if you mean that those seven brass playthings wont throw a round shot

as far as any gun of their size and height above the water, or wont scatter grape and canister with any blunderbuss in your ship, you may possibly find an opportunity that will convince you to the contrary, before we part company."

"They promise well," said the pilot, who was evidently ignorant of the good understanding that existed between the two officers, and wished to conciliate all under his direcs tions, "and I doubt not they will argue the leading points of a combat with good discrction. I see that you have christened them—I suppose for their respective merits. They are indeed expressive names!"

"'Tis the freak of an idle moment," said Barnstable, laughing, as he glanced his eyes to the cannon, above which were painted the several quaint names of "boxer," "plumper," "grinder," "scatterer," "exterminator," and "nail-driver."

"Why have you thrown the midship-gun without the pale of your baptism?" asked the pilot; "or do you know it by the usual title of the 'old woman?'"

"No, no, I have no such petticoat terms on board me," cried the other; "but move more to starboard, and you will

see its style painted on the cheeks of the carriage; it's a name that need not cause them to blush either."

"'Tis a singular epithet, though not without some meaning!"

"It has more than you, perhaps, dream of, sir. That worthy seaman, whom you see leaning against the foremast, and who would serve, on occasion, for a spare spar himself, is the captain of that gun, and more than once has decided some warm disputes with John Bull, by the manner in which he has wielded it. No marine can trail his musket more easily than my coxswain can train his nine-pounder on an object; and thus from their connexion, and some resemblance there is between them in length, it has got the name which you perceive it carries; that of 'long Tom.'"

The pilot smiled as he listened, but turning away from the speaker, the deep expression that crossed his brow but too plainly showed that he trifled only from momentary indulgence; and Griffith intimated to Barnstable, that as the gale was sensibly abating, they would pursue the object of their destination.

Thus recalled to his duty, the commander of the schooner

forgot the delightful theme of expatiating on the merits of his vessel, and issued the necessary orders to direct their movements. The little schooner slowly obeyed the impulse of her helm, and fell off before the wind, when the folds of her squaresail, though limited by a prudent reef, were opened to the blasts, and she shot away from her consort, like a meteor dancing across the waves. The black mass of the frigate's hull soon sunk in distance, and long before the sun had fallen below the hills of England, her tall masts were barely distinguishable by the small cloud of sail that held the vessel to her station. As the ship disappeared, the land seemed to issue out of the bosom of the deep, and so rapid was their progress, that the dwellings of the gentry, the humbler cottages, and even the dim lines of the hedges, became gradually more distinct to the eyes of the bold mariners, until they were beset with the gloom of evening, when the whole scene faded from their view in the darkness of the hour, leaving only the faint outline of the land visible in the tract before them, and the sullen billows of the ocean raging with appalling violence in their rear.

Still the little Ariel held on her way, skimming the ocean like a water-fowl seeking its place of nightly rest, and shooting in towards the land as fearlessly as if the dangers of the preceding night were already forgotten. No shoals or

rocks appeared to arrest her course, and we must leave her gliding into the dark streak that was thrown from the high and rocky cliffs, that lined a basin of bold entrance, where the mariners often sought and found a refuge from the dangers of the German Ocean.

CHAPTER IX.

"Sirrah! how dare you leave your barley broth,
To come in armour thus, against your king?"

Drama.

The large, irregular building, inhabited by Colonel Howard, well deserved the description it had received from the pen of Katherine Plowden. Notwithstanding the confusion in its orders, owing to the different ages in which its several parts had been erected, the interior was not wanting in that appearance of comfort which forms the great characteristic of English domestic life. Its dark and intricate mazes of halls, galleries, and apartments, were all well provided with good and substantial furniture, and whatever might have been the purposes of their original construction, they were now peacefully appropriated to the service of a quiet and well ordered family.

There were divers portentous traditions, of cruel separations and blighted loves, which always linger, like cobwebs, around the walls of old houses, to be heard here also, and which doubtless, in abler hands, might easily have been wrought up into scenes of high interest and delectable pathos. But our humbler efforts must be limited by an attempt to describe man as God has made him, vulgar and unseemly as he may appear to sublimated faculties, to the possessors of which enviable qualifications we desire to say, at once, that we are determined to eschew all things supernaturally refined, as we would the devil. To all those, then, who are tired of the company of their species, we would bluntly insinuate, that the sooner they throw aside our pages, and seize upon those of some more highly gifted bard, the sooner will they be in the way of quitting earth, if not of attaining heaven. Our business is solely to treat of man, and this fair scene on which he acts, and that not in his subtleties and metaphysical contradictions, but in his palpable nature, that all may understand our meaning as well as ourselves—whereby we manifestly reject the prodigious advantage of being thought a genius, by perhaps foolishly refusing the mighty aid of incomprehensibility to establish such a character.

Leaving the gloomy shadows of the cliffs under which the

little Ariel has been seen to steer, and the sullen roaring of the surf along the margin of the ocean, we shall endeavour to transport the reader to the dining-parlour of St. Ruth's Abbey, taking the evening of the same day as the time for introducing another collection of those personages, whose acts and characters it has become our duty to describe.

The room was not of very large dimensions, and every part was glittering with the collected light of half a dozen candles, aided by the fierce rays that glanced from the grate, which held a most cheerful fire of sea-coal. The mouldings of the dark oak wainscoting threw back upon the massive table of mahogany streaks of strong light, which played among the rich fluids that were sparkling on the board, in mimic haloes. The outline of this picture of comfort was formed by damask curtains of a deep red, enormous oak chairs with leathern backs and cushioned seats, as if the apartment were hermetically sealed against the world and its chilling cares.

Around the table which still stood in the centre of the floor, were seated three gentlemen, in the easy enjoyment of their daily repast. The cloth had been drawn, and the bottle was slowly passing among them, as if those who partook of its bounty well knew that neither the time nor the

opportunity would be wanting for their deliberate indulgence in its pleasures.

At one end of the table an elderly man was seated, who performed whatever little acts of courtesy the duties of a host would appear to render necessary, in a company where all seemed to be equally at their ease and at home. This gentleman was in the decline of life, though his erect carriage, quick movements, and steady hand, equally denoted that it was an old age free from the usual infirmities. In his dress, he belonged to that class whose members always follow the fashions of the age anterior to the one in which they live, whether from disinclination to sudden changes of any kind, or from the recollections of a period which, with them, has been hallowed by scenes and feelings that the chilling evening of life can neither revive nor equal. Age might possibly have thrown its blighted frosts on his thin locks, but art had laboured to conceal the ravages with the nicest care. An accurate outline of powder covered not only the parts where the hair actually remained, but where nature had prescribed that hair should grow. His countenance was strongly marked in features, if not in expression, exhibiting, on the whole, a look of noble integrity and high honour, which was a good deal aided in its effect by the

lofty receding forehead, that rose like a monument, above the whole, to record the character of the aged veteran. A few streaks of branching red mingled with a swarthiness of complexion thatwas rendered more conspicuous by the outline of unsullied white which nearly surrounded his prominent features.

Opposite to the host, who it will at once be understood, was Colonel Howard, was the thin, yellow visage of Mr. Christopher Dillon, that bane to the happiness of her consin, already mentioned by Miss Plowden.

Between these two gentlemen was a middle-aged, hard-featured man attired in the livery of King George, whose countenance emulated the scarlet of his cloak, and whose principal employment, at the moment, appeared to consist in doing honour to the cheer of his entertainer.

Occasionally, a servant entered or left the room, in silence, giving admission, however, through the opened door, to the rushing sounds of the gale, as the wind murmured amid the angles and high chimneys of the edifice.

A man, in the dress of a rustic, was standing near the chair of Colonel Howard, between whom and the master of

the mansion, a dialogue had been maintained, which closed as follows. The Colonel was the first to speak, after the curtain is drawn from between the eyes of the reader and the scene.

"Said you farmer, that the Scotchman beheld the vessels with his own eyes?"

The answer was a simple negative.

"Well, well," continued the colonel, "you can withdraw."

The man made a rude attempt at a bow, which being returned by the old soldier with formal grace, he left the room. The host turning to his companions, resumed the subject.

"If those rash boys have really persuaded the silly dotard who commands the frigate, to trust himself within the shoals, on the eve of such a gale as this, their case must have been helpless indeed! Thus may rebellion and disaffection, ever meet with the just indignation of Providence! It would not surprise me, gentlemen, to hear that my native land has been engulphed by earthquakes, or swallowed up

by the ocean, so awful and inexcusable has been the weight of her transgressions! And yet it was a proud and daring boy who held the second station in that ship! I knew his father well, and a gallant gentleman he was, who, like my own brother, the parent of Cecilia, preferred to serve his master on the ocean rather than on the land. His son inherited the bravery of his high spirit, without its loyalty. One would not wish to have such a youth drowned, either." This speech, which partook much of the nature of a soliloquy, especially towards its close, called for no immediate reply; but the soldier, having held his glass to the candle, to admire the rosy hue of its contents, and then sipped of the fluid so often, that nothing but a clear light remained to gaze at, quietly replaced the empty vessel on the table, and, as he extended an arm towards the blushing bottle, he spoke, in the careless tones of one whose thoughts were dwelling on another theme—

"Ay, true enough, sir; good men are scarce, and, as you say, one cannot but mourn his fate, though his death be glorious; quite a loss to his majesty's service, I dare say, it will prove."

"A loss to the service of his majesty?" echoed the host—"his death glorious! no, Captain Borroughcliffe, the death

of no rebel can be glorious; and how he can be a loss to his majesty's service, I am myself quite at a loss to understand."

The soldier, whose ideas were in that happy state of confusion that renders it difficult to command the one most needed, but who still, from long discipline, had them under a wonderful control for the disorder of his brain, answered, with great promptitude—

"I mean the loss of his example, sir. It would have been so appalling to others, to have seen the young man executed instead of shot in battle."

"He is drowned, sir."

"Ah! that is the next thing to being hanged; that circumstance had escaped me."

"It is by no means certain, sir, that the ship and schooner that the drover saw are the vessels you take them to have been," said Mr. Dillon, in a harsh, drawling tone of voice. "I should doubt their daring to venture so

openly on the coast, and in the direct track of our vessels of war."

"These people are our countrymen, Christopher, though they are rebels," exclaimed the colonel. "They are a hardy and brave nation. When I had the honour to serve his majesty, some twenty years since, it was my fortune to face the enemies of my king in a few small affairs, Captain Borroughcliffe; such as the siege of Quebec, and the battle before its gates, a trifling occasion at Ticonderoga, and that unfortunate catastrophe of General Braddock—with a few others. I must say, sir, in favour of the colonists, that they played a manful game on the latter day; and this gentleman, who now heads the rebels, sustained a gallant name among us for his conduct in that disastrous business. He was a discreet, well-behaved young man, and quite a gentleman. I have never denied that Mr. Washington was very much of a gentleman."

"Yes," said the soldier, yawning, "he was educated among his majesty's troops, and he could hardly be otherwise. But I am quite melancholy about this unfortunate drowning, Colonel Howard. Here will be an end of my vo-

cation, I suppose, and I am far from denying that your hospitality has made these quarters most agreeable to me."

"Then, sir, the obligation is only mutual," returned the host, with a polite inclination of his head; "but gentlemen, who, like ourselves, have been made free of the camp, need, not bandy idle compliments about such trifles. If it were my kinsman, Dillon, now, whose thoughts run more on Coke upon Littleton than on the gaieties of a mess-table, and a soldier's life he might think such formalities as necessary as his hard words are to a deed. Come, Borroughcliffe, my dear fellow I believe we have given an honest glass to each of the royal family, (God bless them all!) let us swallow a bumper to the memory of the immortal Wolfe."

"An honest proposal, my gallant host, and such a one as a soldier will never decline," returned the Captain, who roused himself with the occasion. "God bless them all, say I in echo; and if this gracious queen of ours ends as famously as she has begun, 'twill be such a family of princes as no other army in Europe can brag of around a mess-table."

"Ay, ay, there is some consolation in that thought, in the midst of this dire rebellion of my countrymen. But I'll

vex myself no more with the unpleasant recollections; the arms of my sovereign will soon purge that wicked land of the foul stain."

"Of that there can be no doubt," said Borroughcliffe, whose thoughts still continued a little obscured by the sparkling Madeira, that had long lain ripening under a Carolinian sun; "these Yankees fly before his majesty's regulars, like so many dirty clowns in a London mob before a charge of horse-guards."

"Pardon me, Captain Borroughcliffe," said his host, elevating his person to more than its usually erect attitude; "they may be misguided, deluded, and betrayed but the comparison is unjust. Give them arms and give them discipline, and he who gets an inch of their land from them, plentiful as it is, will find a bloody day on which to take possession."

"The veriest coward in Christendom would fight in a country where wine brews itself into such a cordial as this," returned the cool soldier; "I am a living proof that you mistook my meaning; for had not those loose-flapped gentlemen they call Vermontese and Hampshire-granters (God grant them his blessing for the deed!) finished two-thirds of

my company, I should not have been at this day under your roof, a recruiting instead of a marching officer; neither should I have been bound up in a covenant, like the law of Moses, could Burgoyne have made head against their long-legged marchings and counter-marchings. Sir, I drink their healths, with all my heart; and, with such a bottle of golden sunshine before me, rather than displease so good a friend, I will go through Gates's whole army, regiment by regiment, company by company, or, if you insist on the same, even man by man, in a bumper."

"On no account would I tax your politeness so far," returned the colonel, abundantly mollified by this ample concession; "I stand too much your debtor, Captain Borroughcliffe, for so freely volunteering to defend my house against the attacks of my piratical, rebellious, and misguided countrymen, to think of requiring such a concession."

"Harder duty might be performed, and no favours asked, my respectable host," returned the soldier. "Country quarters are apt to be dull, and the liquor is commonly execrable; but in such a dwelling as this, a man can rock himself in the very cradle of contentment. And yet there is one subject of complaint, that I should disgrace my regiment did I

not speak of, for it is incumbent on me, both as a man and a soldier, to be no longer silent."

"Name it, sir, freely, and its cause shall be as freely redressed," said the host, in some amazement.

"Here we three sit, from morning to night," continued the soldier, "bachelors all, well provisioned, and better liquored, I grant you, but like so many well fed anchorites, while two of the loveliest damsels in the island pine in solitude within a hundred feet of us, without tasting the homage of our sighs. This, I will maintain, is a reproach both to your character, Colonel Howard, as an old soldier, and to mine, as a young one. As to our friend Coke on top of Littleton here, I leave him to the quiddities of the law to plead his own cause."

The brow of the host contracted for a moment, and the sallow cheek of Dillon, who had sat during the dialogue in a sullen silence, appeared to grow even livid; but gradually the open brow of the veteran resumed its frank expression, and the lips of the other relaxed into a jesuitical sort of a smile, that was totally disregarded by the captain, who amused himself with sipping his wine while he waited

for an answer, as if he analyzed each drop, that crossed his palate.

After an embarrassing pause of a moment, Colonel Howard broke the silence.

"There is reason in Borroughcliffe's hint, for such I take it to be"—

"I meant it for a plain, matter-of-fact complaint," interrupted the soldier.

"And you have cause for it," continued the colonel. "It is unreasonable, Christopher, that the ladies should allow their dread of these piratical countrymen of ours to exclude us from their society, though prudence may require that they remain secluded in their apartments. We owe the respect to Captain Borroughcliffe, that at least we admit him to the sight of the coffee-urn in an evening."

"That is precisely my meaning," said the captain; "as for dining with them, why, I am well provided for here, but there is no one knows how to set hot water a-hissing in so professional a manner as a woman. So forward, my dear

and honoured colonel, and lay your injunction on them, that they command your humble servant and Mr. Coke unto Littleton to advance and give the countersign of gallantry."

Dillon contracted his disagreeable features into something that was intended for a satirical smile, before he spoke as follows:

"Both the veteran Colonel Howard and the gallant Captain Borroughcliffe may find it easier to overcome the enemies of his majesty in the field, than to shake a woman's caprice. Not a day has passed, these three weeks, that I have not sent my inquiries to the door of Miss Howard, as became her father's kinsman, with a wish to appease her apprehensions of the pirates; but little has she deigned me in reply, more than such thanks as her sex and breeding could not well dispense with."

"Well, you have been as fortunate as myself, and why you should be more so, I see no reason," cried the soldier, throwing a glance of cool contempt at the other; "fear whitens the cheek, and ladies best love to be seen when the roses flourish rather than the lilies."

"A woman is never so interesting, Captain Borroughcliffe,"

said the gallant host, "as when she appears to lean on man for support; and he who does not feel himself honoured by the trust, is a disgrace to his species."

"Bravo! my honoured sir, a worthy sentiment, and spoken like a true soldier; but I have heard much of the loveliness of the ladies of the abbey since I have been in my present quarters, and I feel a strong desire to witness beauty encircled by such loyalty as could induce them to flee their native country, rather than to devote their charms to the rude keeping of the rebels."

The colonel looked grave, and for a moment fierce; but the expression of his displeasure soon passed away in a smile of forced gaiety, and as he cheerfully rose from his seat, he cried—

"You shall be admitted this very night, and this instant, Captain Borroughcliffe. We owe it, sir, to your services here, as well as in the field, and those froward girls shall be humoured no longer. Nay, it is nearly two weeks since I have seen my ward myself, nor have I laid my eyes on my niece but twice in all that time. Christopher, I leave the captain under your good care, while I go seek admission into the cloisters—we call that part of the building the cloisters, be-

cause it holds our nuns, sir! You will pardon my early absence from the table, Captain Borroughcliffe."

"I beg it may not be mentioned; you leave an excellent representative behind you, sir," cried the soldier, taking in the lank figure of Mr. Dillon in a sweeping glance, that terminated with a settled gaze on his decanter. "Make my devoirs to the recluses, my dear colonel, and say all that your own excellent wit shall suggest as an apology for my impatience. Mr. Dillon, I meet you in a bumper to their healths and in their honour."

The challenge was coldly accepted, and while these gentlemen still held their glasses to their lips, Colonel Howard left the apartment, bowing low, and uttering a thousand excuses to his guest, as he proceeded, and even offering a very unnecessary apology of the same effect to his habitual inmate, Mr. Dillon.

"Is fear so very powerful within these old walls?" said the soldier, when the door closed behind their host, "that your ladies deem it necessary to conceal themselves before even an enemy is known to have landed?"

Dillon coolly replied—

"The name of Paul Jones is terrific to all on this coast, I believe; nor are the ladies of St. Ruth singular in their apprehensions."

"Ah! the pirate has bought himself a desperate name, since the affair of Flamborough Head. But let him look to't, if he trusts himself in another Whitehaven expedition, while there is a detachment of the ——th in the neighbourhood, though the men should be nothing better than recruits."

"Our last accounts leave him safe in the court of Louis," returned his companion; "but there are men as desperate as himself, who sail the ocean under the rebel flag, and from one or two of them we have had much reason to apprehend the vengeance of disappointed men. It is they that we hope are lost in this gale."

"Hum! I hope they were dastards, or your hopes are a little unchristian, and"—

He would have proceeded, but the door opened, and his orderly entered, and announced, that a sentinel had detained three men, who were passing along the highway, near the abbey, and who, by their dress, appeared to be seamen.

"Well, let them pass," cried the captain; "what, have we nothing to do better than to stop passengers, like footpads, on the king's highway! give them of your canteens, and let the rascals pass; your orders were to give the alarm, if any hostile party landed on the coast, not to detain peaceable subjects on their lawful business."

"I beg your honour's pardon," returned the sergeant, "but these men seemed lurking about the grounds for no good, and as they kept carefully aloof from the place where our sentinel was posted, until to-night, Downing thought it looked suspiciously, and detained them."

"Downing is a fool, and it may go hard with him for his officiousness. What have you done with the men?"

"I took them to the guard-room in the east wing, your honour."

"Then feed them; and harkye, sirrah! liquor them well, that we hear no complaints, and let them go."

"Yes, sir, yes, your honour shall be obeyed; but there is a straight, soldierly-looking fellow among them, that I think might be persuaded to enlist, if he were detained till morning. I doubt, sir, by his walk, but he has served already."

"Ha! what say you!" cried the captain, pricking up his ears, like a hound who hears a well-known cry, "served, think ye, already?"

"There are signs about him, your honour, to that effect. An old soldier is seldom deceived in such a thing, and considering his disguise, for it can be no other, and the place where we took him, there is no danger of a have-us corpses, until he is tied to us by the laws of the kingdom."

"Peace, you knave!" said Borroughcliffe, rising, and making a devious route towards the door; "you speak in the presence of my lord chief justice that is to be, and should not talk lightly of the laws. But still you say reason; give me your arm, sergeant, and lead the way to the east wing; my eyesight is good for nothing in such a dark night. A soldier should always visit his guard before the tattoo beats.'

After emulating the courtesy of their host, Captain Borroughcliffe retired on his patriotic errand, leaning on his subordinate in a style of most familiar condescension. Dillon continued at the table, endeavouring to express the rancorous feelings of his breast by a satirical smile of contempt, that was necessarily lost on all but himself, as a large mir-

ror threw back the image of his morose and unpleasant features.

But we must precede the veteran colonel in his visit to the 'cloisters."

CHAPTER X.

———"And kindness like their own
Inspired those eyes, affectionate and glad,
That seemed to love whate'er they looked upon;
Whether with Hebe's mirth her features shone,
Or if a shade more pleasing them o'ercast—
Yet so becomingly th' expression past,——
That each succeeding look was lovelier than the last."

Gertrude of Wyoming.

The western wing of St. Ruth-house, or abbey, as the building was indiscriminately called, retained but few vestiges of the uses to which it had been originally devoted. The upper apartments were small and numerous, extending on either side of a long, low, and dark gallery, and might have been the dormitories of the sisterhood who were said to have once inhabited that portion of the edifice; but the ground-floor

had been modernized, as it was then called, about a century before, and retained just enough of its ancient character to blend the venerable with what was thought comfortable in the commencement of the reign of the third George. As this wing had been appropriated to the mistress of the mansion, ever since the building had changed its spiritual character for one of a more carnal nature, Colonel Howard continued the arrangement, when he became the temporary possessor of St. Ruth, until, in the course of events, the apartments which had been appropriated for the accommodation and convenience of his niece, were eventually converted into her prison. But as the severity of the old veteran was as often marked by an exhibition of his virtues as of his foibles, the confinement and his displeasure constituted the sole subjects of complaint that were given to the young lady. That our readers may be better qualified to judge of the nature of their imprisonment, we shall transport them, without further circumlocution, into the presence of the two females, whom they must be already prepared to receive.

The withdrawing-room of St. Ruth's was an apartment which, tradition said, had formerly been the refectory of the little bevy of fair sinners who sought a refuge within its walls from the temptations of the world. Their number was not large, nor their entertainments very splendid, or this limited

space could not have contained them. The room, however, was of fair dimensions, and an air of peculiar comfort, mingled with chastened luxury, was thrown around it, by the voluminous folds of the blue damask curtains that nearly concealed the sides where the deep windows were placed, and by the dark leathern hangings, richly stamped with cunning devices in gold, that ornamented the two others. Massive couches in carved mahogany, with chairs of a similar material and fashion, all covered by the same rich fabric that composed the curtains, together with a Turkey carpet, over the shaggy surface of which all the colours of the rainbow were scattered in bright confusion, united to relieve the gloomy splendour of the enormous mantle, deep, heavy, cornices, and the complicated carvings of the massive woodwork which cumbered the walls. A brisk fire of wood was burning on the hearth, in compliment to the wilful prejudice of Miss Plowden, who had maintained, in her most vivacious manner, that sea-coal was "only tolerable for blacksmiths and Englishmen." In addition to the cheerful blaze from the hearth, two waxen lights, in candlesticks of massive silver, were lending their aid to enliven the apartment. One of these was casting its rays brightly along the confused colours of the carpet on which it stood, flickering before the active movements of the form that played around it with light and animated inflexions. The posture of this

young lady was infantile in grace, and, with one ignorant of her motives, her employment would have been obnoxious to the same construction. Divers small, square pieces of silk, strongly contrasted to each other in colour, lay on every side of her, and were changed, as she kneeled on the floor, by her nimble hands, into as many different combinations as if she were humouring the fancies of her sex, or consulting the shades of her own dark but rich complexion in the shop of a mercer. The close satin dress of this young female served to display her small figure in its true proportions, while her dancing eyes of jet-black shamed the dies of the Italian manufacturer by their superior radiancy. A few ribands of pink, disposed about her person with an air partly studied, and yet carelessly coquettish, seemed rather to reflect than lend the rich bloom that mantled around her laughing countenance, leaving to the eye no cause to regret that she was not fairer.

Another female figure, clad in virgin white, was reclining on the end of a distant couch. The seclusion in which they lived might have rendered this female a little careless of her appearance, or, what was more probable, the comb had been found unequal to its burthen, for her tresses, which rivalled the hue and gloss of the raven, had burst from their confinement, and, drooping over her shoulders, fell along

her dress in rich profusion, finally resting on the damask of the couch, in dark folds, like glittering silk. A small hand which seemed to blush at its own naked beauties, supported her head, imbedded in the volumes of her hair, like the fairest alabaster set in the deepest ebony. Beneath the dark profusion of her curls, which, notwithstanding the sweeping train that fell about her person, covered the summit of her head, lay a low, spotless forehead of dazzling whiteness, that was relieved by two arches, so slightly and truly drawn, that they appeared to have been produced by the nicest touches of art. The fallen lids and long silken lashes concealed the eyes, that rested on the floor, as if their mistress mused in melancholy. The remainder of the features of this maiden were of a kind that is most difficult to describe, being neither regular nor perfect in their several parts, yet harmonizing, and composing a whole, that formed an exquisite picture of female delicacy and loveliness. There might or there might not have been a tinge of slight red in her cheeks, but it varied with each emotion of her bosom, even as she mused in quiet, now seeming to steal insidiously over her glowing temples, and then leaving on her face an almost startling paleness. Her stature, as she reclined, seemed above the medium height of womanhood, and her figure was rather delicate than full, though that little foot that rested on the damask cushion before her displayed a rounded outline that any of her sex might envy.

"Oh! I'm as expert as if I were signal officer to the lord high admiral of this realm!" exclaimed the laughing female on the floor, clapping her hands together in girlish exultation. "I do long, Cecilia, for an opportunity to exhibit my skill."

While her cousin was speaking, Miss Howard raised her head, with a faint smile, and as she turned her eyes towards the other, a spectator might have been disappointed, but could not have been displeased, by the unexpected change the action produced in the expression of her countenance. Instead of the piercing black eyes that the deep colour of her tresses would lead him to expect, he would have beheld two large, mild, blue orbs, that seemed to float in a liquid so pure as to be nearly invisible, and which were more remarkable for their tenderness and persuasion, than for the vivid flashes that darted from the quick glances of her companion.

"The success of your mad excursion to the seaside, my cousin, has bewildered your brain," returned Cecilia; "but I know not how to conquer your disease, unless we prescribe salt-water for the remedy, as in some other cases of madness."

"Ah! I am afraid your nostrum would be useless," cried

Katherine; "it has failed to wash out the disorder from the sedate Mr. Richard Barnstable, who has had the regimen administered to him through many a hard gale, but who continues as fair a candidate for bedlam as ever. Would you think it, Cicely, the crazy one urged me, in the ten minutes' conversation we held together on the cliffs, to accept of his schooner as a shower-bath!"

"I can think that your hardihood might encourage him to expect much, but surely he could not have been serious in such a proposal!"

"Oh! to do the wretch justice, he did say something of a chaplain to consecrate the measure, but there was boundless impudence in the thought. I have not, nor shall I forget it, or forgive him for it, these six-and-twenty years. What a fine time he must have had of it, in this little Ariel, among the monstrous waves we saw tumbling in upon the shore to-day, coz! I hope they will wash his impudence out of him! I do think the man cannot have had a dry thread about him, from sun to sun. I must believe it is a punishment for his boldness, and, be certain, I shall tell him of it. I will form half a dozen signals, this instant, to joke at his moist condition, in very revenge."

Pleased with her own thoughts, and buoyant with the secret hope that her adventurous undertaking would be finally crowned with complete success, the gay girl shook her black locks, in infinite mirth, and tossed the mimic flags gaily around her person, as she was busied in forming new combinations, in order to amuse herself with her lover's disastrous situation. But the features of her cousin clouded with the thoughts that were excited by her remarks, and she replied, in a tone that bore some little of the accents of reproach—

"Katherine! Katherine! can you jest when there is so much to apprehend! Forget you what Alice Dunscombe told us of the gale, this morning! and that she spoke of two vessels, a ship and a schooner, that had been seen venturing with fearful temerity within the shoals, only six miles from the Abbey, and that unless God in his gracious providence had been kind to them, there was but little doubt that their fate would be a sad one! Can you, that know so well who and what these daring mariners are, be merry about the selfsame winds that cause their danger?"

The thoughtless, laughing girl was recalled to her recollection by this remonstrance, and every trace of mirth vanished from her countenance, leaving a momentary death-

like paleness crossing her face, as she clasped her hands before her, and fastened her keen eyes vacantly on the splendid pieces of silk that now lay unheeded around her. At this critical moment the door of the room slowly opened, and Colonel Howard entered the apartment with an air that displayed a droll mixture of stern indignation, with a chivalric and habitual respect to the sex.

"I solicit your pardon, young ladies, for the interruption," he said; "I trust, however, that an old man's presence can never be entirely unexpected in the drawing-room of his wards."

As he bowed, the colonel seated himself on the end of the couch, opposite to the place where his niece had been reclining, for Miss Howard had risen at his entrance, and continued standing until her uncle had comfortably disposed of himself. Throwing a glance, which was not entirely free from self-commendation around the comfortable apartment, the veteran proceeded, in the same tone as before—

"You are not without the means of making any guests welcome, nor do I see the necessity of such constant seclu-

sion from the eyes of the world as you thus rigidly practise."

Cecilia looked timidly at her uncle, with surprise, before she returned an answer to his remark.

"We certainly owe much to your kind attention, dear sir," she at length uttered; "but is our retirement altogether voluntary?"

"How can it be otherwise! are you not mistress of this mansion, madam! In selecting the residence where your, and, permit me to add, my ancestors, so long dwelt, in credit and honour, I have surely been less governed by any natural pride that I might well have entertained on such a subject, than by a desire to consult your comfort and happiness. Everything appears to my aged eyes as if we ought not to be ashamed to receive our friends within these walls. The cloisters of St. Ruth, Miss Howard, are not entirely bare, neither are their tenants wholly unworthy to be seen."

"Open, then, the portals of the abbey, sir, and your niece will endeavour to do proper credit to the hospitality of its master."

"That was spoken like Harry Howard's daughter, frankly and generously!" cried the old soldier, insensibly edging himself nearer to his niece. "If my brother had devoted himself to the camp, instead of the sea, Cecilia, he would have made one of the bravest and ablest generals in his majesty's service—poor Harry! he might have been living at this very day, and at this moment leading the victorious troops of his sovereign through the revolted colonies in triumph. But he is gone, Cicely, and has left you behind him, as his dear representative, to perpetuate our family, and to possess what little has been left to us from the ravages of the times."

"Surely, dear sir," said Cecilia, taking his hand, which had unconsciously approached her person, and pressing it to her lips, "we have no cause to complain of our lot in respect to fortune, though it may cause us bitter regret that so few of us are left to enjoy it."

"No, no, no," said Katherine, in a low, hurried voice; "Alice Dunscombe is and must be wrong; providence would never abandon brave men to so cruel a fate!"

"Alice Dunscombe is here to atone for her error, if she has fallen into one," said a quiet, subdued voice, in which

the accents of a provincial dialect, however, were slightly perceptible, and which, in its low tones, wanted that silvery clearness that gave so much feminine sweetness to the words of Miss Howard, and which even rung melodiously in the ordinarily vivacious strains of her cousin.

The surprise created by these sudden interruptions, caused a total suspension of the discourse. Katherine Plowden, who had continued kneeling, in the attitude before described, arose, and as she looked about her in momentary confusion, the blood again mantled her face with the fresh and joyous springs of life. The other speaker advanced steadily into the middle of the room, and after returning, with studied civility, the low bow of Colonel Howard, seated herself in silence on the opposite couch. The manner of her entrance, her reception, and her attire, sufficiently denoted that the presence of this female was neither unusual nor unwelcome. She was dressed with marked simplicity, though with a studied neatness, that more than compensated for the absence of ornaments. Her age might not have much exceeded thirty, but there was an adoption of customs in her attire that indicated she was not unwilling to be thought older. Her fair flaxen hair was closely confined by a dark bandeau, such as was worn in a nation farther north by virgins only, over which a few curls strayed,

in a manner that showed the will of their mistress alone restrained their luxuriance. Her light complexion had lost much of its brilliancy, but enough still remained to assert its original beauty and clearness. To this description might be added, fine, mellow blue eyes, beautifully white, though large teeth, a regular set of features, and a person that was clad in a dark lead-coloured silk, which fitted her full, but gracefully moulded form, with the closest exactness.

Colonel Howard paused a moment, after this lady was seated, and then turning himself to Katherine with an air that became stiff and constrained by attempting to seem extremely easy, he said—

"You no sooner summon Miss Alice, but she appears, Miss Plowden—ready and (I am bold to say, Miss Alice) able to defend herself against all charges that her worst enemies can allege against her."

"I have no charges to make against Miss Dunscombe," said Katherine, pettishly, "nor do I wish to have dissensions created between me and my friends, even by Colonel Howard."

"Colonel Howard will studiously avoid such offences in future," said the veteran, bowing; and turning stiffly to the others, he continued—"I was just conversing with my niece, as you entered, Miss Alice, on the subject of her immuring herself like one of the veriest nuns who ever inhabited these cloisters. I tell her, madam, that neither her years, nor my fortune, nor, indeed, her own, (for the child of Harry Howard was not left pennyless,) require that we should live as if the doors of the world were closed against us, or there was no other entrance to St. Ruth's but through those antiquated windows. Miss Plowden, I feel it to be my duty to inquire why those pieces of silk are provided in such an unusual abundance, and in so extraordinary a shape?"

"To make a gala dress for the ball you are about to give, sir," said Katherine, with a saucy smile, that was only checked by the reproachful glance of her cousin. "You have taste in a lady's attire, Colonel Howard; will not this bright yellow form a charming relief to my brown face, while this white and black relieve one another, and this pink contrasts so sweetly with black eyes. Will not the whole form a turban fit for an empress to wear?"

As the arch maiden prattled on in this unmeaning man-

ner, her rapid fingers entwined the flags in a confused maze, which she threw over her head in a form not unlike the ornament for which she intimated it was intended. The veteran was by far too polite to dispute a lady's taste, and he renewed the dialogue, with his slightly awakened suspicions completely quieted by her dexterity and artifice. But although it was not difficult to deceive Colonel Howard in matters of female dress, the case was very different with Alice Dunscombe. This lady gazed, with a steady eye and reproving countenance, on the fantastical turban, until Katherine threw herself by her side, and endeavoured to lead her attention to other subjects, by her playful motions and whispered questions.

"I was observing, Miss Alice," continued the colonel, "that although the times had certainly inflicted some loss on my estate, yet we were not so much reduced, as to be unable to receive our friends in a manner that would not disgrace the descendants of the ancient possessors of St. Ruth. Cecilia, here, my brother Harry's daughter, is a young lady that any uncle might be proud to exhibit, and I would have her, madam, show your English dames, that we rear no unworthy specimens of the parent stock on the other side of the Atlantic."

"You have only to declare your pleasure, my good uncle," said Miss Howard, "and it shall be executed."

"Tell us how we can oblige you, sir," continued Katherine, "and if it be in any manner that will relieve the tedium of this dull residence, I promise you at least one cheerful assistant to your scheme."

"You speak fair," cried the colonel, "and like two discreet and worthy girls! Well, then, our first step shall be to send a message to Dillon and the captain, and invite them to attend your coffee. I see the hour approaches."

Cecilia made no reply, but looked distressed, and dropped her mild eyes to the carpet; but Miss Plowden took it upon herself to answer.

"Nay, sir, that would be for them to proceed in the matter; as your proposal was that the first step should be ours, suppose we all adjourn to your part of the house, and do the honours of the tea-table in your drawing-room, instead of our own. I understand, sir, that you have had an apartment fitted up for that purpose in some style; a woman's taste might aid your designs, however."

"Miss Plowden, I believe I intimated to you some time

since," said the displeased Colonel, "that, so long as certain suspicious vessels were known to hover on this coast, I should desire that you and Miss Howard would confine yourselves to this wing."

"Do not say that we confine ourselves," said Katherine, "but let it be spoken in plain English, that you confine us here."

"Am I a jailer, madam, that you apply such epithets to my conduct? Miss Alice must form strange conclusions of our manners, if she receive her impressions from your very singular remarks. I—"

"All measures adopted from a dread of the ship and the schooner that ran within the Devil's Grip, yester-eve, may be dispensed with now," interrupted Miss Dunscombe, in a melancholy, reflecting tone. "There are few living, who know the dangerous paths that can conduct even the smallest craft in safety from the land, with daylight and fair winds; but when darkness and adverse gales oppose them, the chance for safety lies wholly in God's kindness."

"There is truly much reason to believe they are lost," returned the veteran, in a voice in which no exultation was apparent.

"They are not lost!" exclaimed Katherine, with startling energy, leaving her seat, and walking across the room to join Cecilia, with an air that seemed to elevate her little figure to the height of her cousin. "They are skilful and they are brave, and what gallant sailors can do, will they do, and successfully; besides, in whose behalf would a just Providence sooner exercise its merciful power, than to protect the daring children of an oppressed country, while contending against tyranny and countless wrongs?"

The conciliating disposition of the colonel deserted him, as he listened. His own black eyes sparkled with a vividness unusual for his years, and his courtesy barely permitted the lady to conclude, ere he broke forth.

"What sin, madam, what damning crime, would sooner call down the just wrath of Heaven on the transgressors' than the act of foul rebellion? It was this crime, madam' that deluged England in blood in the reign of the first Charles; it is this crime that has dyed more fields red than all the rest of man's offences united; it has been visited on our race as a condign punishment, from the days of the deservedly devoted Absalom, down to the present time; in short, it lost heaven for ever to some of the most glorious of its angels, and there is much reason to believe that it is the one unpardonable sin named in the holy gospels."

"I know not that you have authority for believing it to be the heavy enormity that you mention, Colonel Howard," said Miss Dunscombe, anticipating the spirited reply of Katherine, and willing to avert it; she hesitated an instant, and then drawing a heavy, shivering sigh, she continued, in a voice that grew softer as she spoke—'tis indeed a crime of magnitude, and one that throws the common backslidings of our lives, speaking by comparison, into the sunshine of his favour. Many there are, who sever the dearest ties of this life, by madly rushing into its sinful vortex; for I fain think the heart grows hard with the sight of human calamity, and becomes callous to the miseries its owner inflicts; especially where we act the wrongs on our own kith and kin, regardless who or how many that are dear to us suffer by our evil deeds. It is, besides, Colonel Howard, a dangerous temptation, to one little practised in the great world, to find himself suddenly elevated into the seat of power; and if it do not lead to the commission of great crimes, it surely prepares the way to it, by hardening the heart."

"I hear you patiently, Miss Alice," said Katherine, dancing her little foot, in affected coolness, "for you neither know of whom nor to whom you speak. But Colonel Howard has not that apology. Peace, Cecilia, for I must speak! Believe them not, dear girl; there is not a wet hair on their heads. For you, Colonel Howard, who must recollect that the sister's

son of the mothers of both your niece and myself is on board that frigate, there is an appearance of cruelty in using such language."

"I pity the boy! from my soul I pity him?" exclaimed the veteran; "he is a child, and has followed the current that is sweeping our unhappy colonies down the tide of destruction. But there are others in that vessel, who have no excuse of ignorance to offer. There is a son of my old acquaintance, and the bosom friend of my brother Harry, Cecilia's father, dashing Hugh Griffith, as we called him. The urchins left home together, and were rated on board one of his majesty's vessels on the same day. Poor Harry lived to carry a broad pennant in the service, and Hugh died in command of a frigate. This boy, too! he was nurtured on board his father's vessel, and learned, from his majesty's discipline, how to turn his arms against his king. There is something shockingly unnatural in that circumstance, Miss Alice; 'tis like the child inflicting a blow on the parent. 'Tis such men as these, with Washington at their head, who maintain the bold front this rebellion wears."

"There are men, who have never worn the servile livery of Britain, sir, whose names are as fondly cherished in America as any that she boasts of," said Katherine, proudly;

"ay, sir, and those who would gladly oppose the bravest officers in the British fleet."

"I contend not against your misguided reason," said Colonel Howard, rising with cool respect. "A young lady who ventures to compare rebels with gallant gentlemen engaged in their duty to their prince, cannot escape the imputation of possessing a misguided reason. No man—I speak not of woman, who cannot be supposed so well versed in human nature—but no man, who has reached the time of life that entitles him to be called by that name, can consort with these disorganizers, who would destroy every thing that is sacred —these levellers, who would pull down the great, to exal the little—these jacobites, who—who"—

"Nay, sir, if you are at a loss for opprobrious epithets," said Katherine, with provoking coolness, "call on Mr. Christopher Dillon for assistance; he waits your pleasure at the door."

Colonel Howard turned in amazement, forgetting his angry declamations at this unexpected intelligence, and beheld, in reality, the sombre visage of his kinsman, who stood holding the door in his haud, apparently as much surprised at finding himself in the presence of the ladics, as they themselves could be at his unusual visit.

CHAPTER XI.

"Prithee, Kate, let's stand aside, and see the end of this controversy."

Shakspeare.

During the warm discussions of the preceding chapter, Miss Howard had bowed her pale face to the arm of the couch, and sate an unwilling and distressed listener to the controversy; but now that another, and one whom she thought an unauthorized intruder on her privacy, was announced, she asserted the dignity of her sex as proudly, though with something more of discretion, than her cousin could possibly have done. Rising from her seat, she inquired—

"To what are we indebted for so unexpected a visit from Mr. Dillon? Surely he must know that we are prohibited going to the part of the dwelling where he resides, and I trust Colonel Howard will tell him that common justice requires we should be permitted to be private."

The gentleman replied, in a manner in which malignant anger was sufficiently mingled with calculating humility—

"Miss Howard will think better of my intrusion, when she knows that I come on business of importance to her uncle."

"Ah! that may alter the case, Kit; but the ladies must have the respect that is due to their sex. I forgot, somehow, to have myself announced; but that Borroughcliffe leads me deeper into my Madeira than I have been accustomed to go, since the time when my poor brother Harry, with his worthy friend, Hugh Griffith—the devil seize Hugh Griffith, and all his race—your pardon, Miss Alice—what is your business with me, Mr. Dillon?"

"I bear a message from Captain Borroughcliffe. You may remember that, according to your suggestions, the sentinels were to be changed every night, sir."

"Ay! ay! we practised that in our campaign against Montcalm; 'twas necessary to avoid the murders of their Indians, who were sure, Miss Alice, to shoot down a man at his post, if he were placed two nights running in the same place."

"Well, sir, your prudent precautions have not been thrown away," continued Dillon, moving farther into the apartment, as if he felt himself becoming a more welcome guest as he proceeded; the consequences are, that we have already made three prisoners."

"True it has been a most politic scheme!" exclaimed Katherine Plowden, with infinite contempt. "I suppose, as Mr. Christopher Dillon applauds it so highly, that it has some communion with the law! and that the redoubtable garrison of St. Ruth are about to reap the high glory of being most successful thief-takers!"

The sallow face of Dillon actually became livid as he replied, and his whole frame shook with the rage that he vainly endeavoured to suppress.

"There may be a closer communion with the law and its ministers, perhaps, than Miss Plowden can desire," he said; "for rebellion seldom finds favour in any Christian code."

"Rebellion!" exclaimed the colonel; "and what has this detention of three vagabonds to do with rebellion, Kit? Has the damnable poison found its way across the Atlantic?—your pardon, Miss Alice—but this is a subject

on which you can feel with me; I know your sentiments on the allegiance that is due to our anointed sovereign.—Speak, Mr. Dillon are we surrounded by another set of demons! if so, we must give ourselves to the work, and rally round our prince! for this island is the main pillar of his throne."

"I cannot say that there is any appearance, at present, of an intention to rise in this island," said Dillon, with demure gravity; "though the riots in London warrant any precautionary measures on the part of his majesty's ministers, even to a suspension of the habeas corpus. But you have had your suspicions concerning two certain vessels that have been threatening the coast, for several days past, in a most piratical manner?"

The little foot of Katherine played rapidly on the splendid carpet, but she contented herself with bestowing a glance of the most sovereign contempt on the speaker, as if she disdained any further reply. With the colonel, however, this was touching a theme that lay nearest his heart, and he answered, in a manner worthy of the importance of the subject—

"You speak like a sensible man, and a loyal subject Mr.

Dillon. The habeas corpus, Miss Alice, was obtained in the reign of king John, along with the magna charta, for the security of the throne, by his majesty's barons; some of my own blood were of the number, which alone would be a pledge that the dignity of the crown was properly consulted. As to our piratical countrymen, Christopher, there is much reason to think that the vengeance of an offended providence has already reached them. Those who know the coast well, tell me that, without a better pilot than an enemy would be likely to procure, it would be impossible for any vessel to escape the shoals among which they entered, on a dark night, and with an adverse gale; the morning has arrived, and they are not to be seen!"

"But be they friends or be they enemies, sir," continued Dillon, respectfully, "there is much reason to think that we have now in the Abbey those who can tell us something of their true character; for the men we have detained carry with them the appearance of having just landed, and wear not only the dress but the air of seamen."

"Of seamen!" echoed Katherine, a deadly paleness chasing from her cheeks the bloom which indignation had heightened.

"Of seamen, Miss Plowden," repeated Dillon, with malignant satisfaction, but concealing it under an air of submissive respect.

"I thank you, sir, for so gentle a term," replied the young lady, recollecting herself, and recovering her presence of mind in the same instant; "the imagination of Mr. Dillon is so apt to conjure the worst, that he is entitled to our praise for so far humouring our weakness as not to alarm us with the apprehensions of their being pirates."

"Nay, madam, they may yet deserve that name," returned the other coolly; "but my education has instructed me to hear the testimony before I pronounce sentence."

"Ah! that the boy has found in his Coke upon Littleton," cried the colonel; "the law is a salutary corrective to human infirmities, Miss Alice, and among other thing, it teaches patience to a hasty temperament. But for this cursed, unnatural rebellion, madam, the young man would, at this moment, have been diffusing its blessings from a judical chair, in one of the colonies—ay! and I pledge myself to all alike, black and white, red and yellow, with such proper distinctions as nature has made between the officer and the private. Keep a good heart, kinsman; we shall yet find a time! the royal

arms have many hands, and things look better at the last advices. But come, we will proceed to the guard-room, and put these stragglers to the question; runaways, I'll venture to predict from one of his majesty's cruisers, or, perhaps, honest subjects engaged in supplying the service with men. Come, Kit, come, let us go, and—"

"Are we then to lose the company of Colonel Howard so soon?" said Katherine, advancing to her guardian, with an air of blandishment and pleasantry. "I know that he too soon forgets the hasty language of our little disputes, to part in anger, if, indeed, he will even quit us till he has tasted of our coffee."

The veteran turned to the speaker of this unexpected address, and listened with profound attention. When she had done, he replied, with a good deal of softness in his tones—

"Ah! provoking one! you know me too well, to doubt my forgiveness; but duty must be attended to, though even a young lady's smiles tempt me to remain. Yes, yes, child, you too are the daughter of a very brave and worthy seaman; but you carry your attachment to that profession too far, Miss Plowden—you do, indeed you do."

Katherine might have faintly blushed, but the slight smile, which mingled with the expression of her shame, gave to her countenance a look of additional archness, and she laid her hand lightly on the sleeve of her guardian, to detain him, as she replied—

"Yet why leave us, Colonel Howard? It is long since we have seen you in the cloisters, and you know you come as a father; tarry, and you may yet add confessor to the title."

"I know thy sins already girl," said the worthy colonel, unconsciously yielding to her gentle efforts to lead him back to his seat; "they are deadly rebellion in your heart to your prince, a most inveterate propensity to salt-water, and a great disrespect to the advice and wishes of an old fellow whom your father's will and the laws of the realm have made the guardian of your person and fortune."

"Nay, say not the last, dear sir," cried Katherine; "for there is not a syllable you have ever said to me, on that foolish subject that I have forgotten. Will you resume your seat again? Cecilia, Colonel Howard consents to take his coffee with us."

"But you forget the three men, honest Kit, there, and our respectable guest, Captain Borroughcliffe."

"Let honest Kit stay there, if he please; you may send request to Captain Borroughcliffe to join our party; I ave a woman's curiosity to see the soldier; and as for the hree men—" she paused, and affected to muse a moment, hen she continued, as if struck by an obvious thought— Yes, and the men can be brought in and examined here; ho knows but they may have been wrecked in the gale, and eed our pity and assistance, rather than deserve your sus- icions."

"There is a solemn warning in Miss Plowden's con- ecture, that should come home to the breasts of all who ve on this wild coast," said Alice Dunscombe; "I have nown many a sad wreck among the hidden shoals, and hen the wind has blown but a gentle gale, compared to ast night's tempest. The wars, and the uncertainties of he times, together with man's own wicked passions, have nade great havoc with those who knew well the windings f the channels among the "Ripples." Some there were ho could pass, as I have often heard, within a fearful listance of the "Devil's Grip," the darkest night that ever hadowed England; but all are now gone of that daring et, either by the hand of death, or, what is even as nournful, by unnatural banishment from the land of their athers."

"This war has then probably drawn off most of them for your recollections must be quite recent, Miss Alice," said the veteran; "as many of them were engaged in the business of robbing his majesty's revenue, the country is in some measure requited for their former depredations, by their present services, and at the same time it is happily rid of their presence. Ah! madam, ours is a glorious constitution, where things are so nicely balanced, that, as in the physical organization of a healthy, vigorous man, the baser parts are purified in the course of things, by its own wholesome struggles."

The pale features of Alice Dunscombe became slightly tinged with red, as the colonel proceeded, nor did the faint glow entirely leave her pallid face, until she had said—

"There might have been some who knew not how to respect the law of the land, for such are never wanting; but there were others, who, however guilty they might be in many respects, need not charge themselves with that mean crime, and yet who could find the passages that lie hid from common eyes, beneath the rude waves, as well as you could find the way through all the halls and galleries of the Abbey, with a noonday sun shining upon its vanes and high chimneys."

"Is it your pleasure, Colonel Howard, that we examine the three men, and ascertain whether they belong to the number of these gifted pilots?" said Christopher Dillon, who was growing uneasy at his awkward situation, and who hardly deemed it necessary to conceal the look of contempt which he cast at the mild Alice, while he spoke; "perhaps we may gather information enough from them, to draw a chart of the coast that may gain us credit with my lords of the Admiralty."

This unprovoked attack on their unresisting and unoffending guest, brought the rich blood to the very temples of Miss Howard, who rose, and addressed herself to her kinsman, with a manner that could not easily be mistaken, any more than it could be condemned—

"If Mr. Dillon will comply with the wishes of Colonel Howard, as my cousin has expressed them, we shall not, at least, have to accuse ourselves of unnecessarily detaining men who probably are more unfortunate than guilty."

When she concluded, Cecilia walked across the apartment, and took a seat by the side of Alice Dunscombe, with whom she began to converse, in a low, soothing tone of voice. Mr. Dillon bowed with deprecating humility, and having ascertained that Colonel Howard chose to give an audience

where he sate to the prisoners, he withdrew to execute his mission, secretly exulting at any change that promised to lead to a renewal of an intercourse that might terminate more to his advantage, than the lofty beauty whose favour he courted was, at present, disposed to concede.

"Christopher is a worthy, serviceable, good fellow," said the colonel, when the door closed, "and I hope to live, yet, to see him clad in ermine; I would not be understood literally, but figuratively, for furs would but ill comport with the climate of the Carolinas. I trust I am to be consulted by his majesty's ministers when the new appointments shall be made for the subdued colonies, and he may safely rely on my good word being spoken in his favour. Would he not make an excellent and independent ornament of the bench, Miss Plowden?"

Katherine compressed her lips a little, as she replied—

"I must profit by his own discreet rules, and see testimony to that effect, before I decide, sir. But listen!" The young lady's colour changed rapidly, and her eyes became fixed in a sort of feverish gaze on the door. "He has at least been active; I hear the heavy tread of men already approaching."

"Ah! it is he certainly; justice ought always to be prompt as well as certain, to make it perfect; like a drum-head court-martial, which, by the way, is as summary a sort of government as heart could wish to live under. If his majesty's ministers could be persuaded to introduce it into the revolted colonies—"

"Listen!" interrupted Katherine, in a voice which bespoke her deep anxiety; "they draw near!"

The sound of footsteps was in fact now so audible as to induce the colonel to suspend the delivery of his plan for governing the recovered provinces. The long, low gallery, which was paved with a stone flagging, soon brought the footsteps of the approaching party more distinctly to their ears, and presently a low tap at the door announced their arrival. Colonel Howard arose, with the air of one who was to sustain the principal character in the ensuing interview, and bade them enter. Cecilia and Alice Dunscombe merely cast careless looks at the opening door, indifferent to the scene; but the quick eye of Katherine embraced, at a glance, every figure in the group. Drawing a long, quivering breath, she fell back on the couch, and her eyes again lighted with their playful expression, as she hummed a low, rapid air, with a voice in which even the suppressed tones were liquid melody.

Dillon entered, preceding the soldier, whose gait had become more steady, and in whose rigid eye a thoughtful expression had taken the place of its former vacant gaze. In short, something had manifestly restored to him a more complete command of his mental powers, although he might not have been absolutely sobered. The rest of the party continued in the gallery, while Mr. Dillon presented the renovated captain to the colonel, when the latter did him the same kind office with the ladies.

"Miss Plowden," said the veteran, for she offered first in the circle, "this is my friend Captain Borroughcliffe; he has long been ambitious of this honour, and I have no doubt his reception will be such as to leave him no cause to repent he has been at last successful.

Katherine smiled, and answered, with ambiguous emphasis—

"I know not how to thank him sufficiently for the care he has bestowed on our poor persons."

The soldier looked steadily at her, for a moment, with an eye that seemed to threaten a retaliation in kind, ere he replied—

"One of those smiles, madam, would be an ample compensation for services that are more real than such as exist only in intention."

Katherine bowed with more complacency than she usually bestowed on those who wore the British uniform, and they proceeded to the next.

"This is Miss Alice Dunscombe, Captain Borroughcliffe, daughter of a very worthy clergyman who was formerly the curate of this parish, and a lady who does us the pleasure of giving us a good deal of her society, though far less than we all wish for."

The captain returned the civil inclination of Alice, and the colonel proceeded.

"Miss Howard, allow me to present Captain Borroughcliffe, a gentleman who, having volunteered to defend St. Ruth in these critical times, merits all the favour of its mistress."

Cecilia gracefully rose, and received her guest with sweet complacency. The soldier made no reply to the customary compliments that she uttered, but stood an instant gazing

at her speaking countenance, and then, laying his hand involuntarily on his breast, bowed nearly to his sword-hilt.

These formalities duly observed, the colonel declared his readiness to receive the prisoners. As the door was opened by Dillon, Katherine cast a cool and steady look at the strangers, and beheld the light glancing along the arms of the soldiers who guarded them. But the seamen entered alone; while the rattling of arms, and the heavy dash of the muskets on the stone pavement, announced that it was thought prudent to retain a force at hand, to watch these secret intruders on the grounds of the abbey.

CHAPTER XII.

"Food for powder; they'll fill a pit as well as better."

Falstaff.

The three men, who now entered the apartment, appeared to be nothing daunted by the presence into which they were ushered, though clad in the coarse and weather-beaten vestments of seamen who had been exposed to recent and severe duty. They silently obeyed the direction of the soldier's finger, and took their stations in a distant corner of the room, like men who knew the deference due to rank, at the same time that the habits of their lives had long accustomed them to encounter the vicissitudes of the world. With this slight preparation, Colonel Howard began the business of examination.

"I trust ye are all good and loyal subjects," the veteran commenced, with a considerate respect for innocence, "but

the times are such that even the most worthy characters become liable to suspicion; and, consequently, if our apprehensions should prove erroneous, you must overlook the mistake, and attribute it to the awful condition into which rebellion has plunged this empire. We have much reason to fear that some project is about to be undertaken on the coast by the enemy, who has appeared, we know, with a frigate and schooner; and the audacity of the rebels is only equalled by their shameless and wicked disrespect for the rights of their sovereign."

While Colonel Howard was uttering his apologetic preamble, the prisoners fastened their eyes on him with much interest; but when he alluded to the apprehended attack, the gaze of two of them became more keenly attentive, and before he concluded, they exchanged furtive glances of deep meaning. No reply was made, however, and after a short pause, as if to allow time for his words to make a proper impression, the veteran continued—

"We have no evidence, I understand, that you are in the smallest degree connected with the enemies of this country but as you have been found out of the king's-highway, or, rather on a by-path, which I must confess is frequently used by the people of the neighbourhood, but which is never-

theless nothing but a by-path, it becomes no more than what self-preservation requires of us, to ask you a few such questions as I trust will be satisfactorily answered: To use your own nautical phrases, 'from whence came ye, pray?' and, 'whither are ye bound?' "

A low, deep voice replied—

"From Sunderland, last, and bound, over land, to Whitehaven."

This simple and direct answer was hardly given, before the attention of the listeners was called to Alice Dunscombe, who uttered a faint shriek, and rose from her seat involuntarily, while her eyes seemed to roll fearfully, and perhaps a little wildly, round the room.

"Are you ill, Miss Alice?" said the sweet soothing tones of Cecilia Howard; "you are, indeed, you are; lean on me that I may lead you to your apartment."

"Did you hear it, or was it only fancy?" she answered her cheek blanched to the whiteness of death, and her whole frame shuddering as if in convulsions; "say did you hear it too?"

"I have heard nothing but the voice of my uncle, who is standing near you anxious, as we all are, for you recovery from this dreadful agitation."

Alice still gazed wildly from face to face. Her eye did not rest satisfied with dwelling on those who surrounded her, but surveyed, with a sort of frantic eagerness the figures and appearance of the three men, who stood in humble patience, the silent and unmoved witnesses of this extraordinary scene. At length she veiled her eyes with both her hands, as if to shut out some horrid vision, and then removing them, she smiled languidly, as she signed for Cecilia to assist her from the room. To the polite and assiduous offers of the gentlemen, she returned no other thanks than those conveyed in her looks and gestures; but when the sentinels who paced the gallery were passed, and the ladies were alone, she breathed a long, shivering sigh, and found an utterance.

"'Twas like a voice from the silent grave!" she said, "but it would be no more than mockery. No, no, 'tis a just punishment for letting the image of the creature fill the place that should be occupied only with the Creator. Ah! Miss Howard, Miss Plowden, ye are both young—in the pride of your beauty and loveliness—but little do ye know,

and less do ye dread, the temptations and errors of a sinful world."

"Her thoughts wander!" whispered Katherine, with anxious tenderness; "some awful calamity has affected her intellects!"

"Yes, it must be; my sinful thoughts have wandered, and conjured sounds that it would have been dreadful to have heard in truth, and within these walls," said Alice, more composedly, smiling with a ghastly expression, as she gazed on the two beautiful solicitous maidens who supported her yielding person. "But the moment of weakness is passed, and I am better; aid me to my room, and return, that you may not interrupt the reviving harmony between yourselves and Colonel Howard. I am now better, nay, I am quite restored.

"Say not so, dear Miss Alice," returned Cecilia; "your face denies what your kindness to us induces you to utter! ill, very ill, you are, nor shall even your own command induce me to leave you."

"Remain, then Miss Howard," bestowing a look of grateful affection on her lovely supporter; "and while our-

Katherine returns to the drawing-room to give the gentlemen their coffee, you shall continue with me, as my gentle nurse."

By this time they had gained the apartment, and Katherine, after assisting her cousin to place Alice on her bed, returned to do the honours of the drawing-room.

Colonel Howard ceased his examination of the prisoners at her entrance, to inquire, with courtly solicitude, after the invalid; and when his questions were answered, he again proceeded, as follows—

"This is what the lads would call plain-sailing, Borroughcliffe; they are out of employment in Sunderland, and have acquaintances and relatives in Whitehaven, to whom they are going for assistance and labour. All very probable, and perfectly harmless."

"Nothing more so, my respectable host," returned the jocund soldier; "but it seemeth a grevious misfortune that a trio of such flesh and blood should need work wherewithal to exercise their thews and sinews, while so many of the vessels of his majesty's fleet navigate the ocean in quest of the enemies of old England."

"There is truth in that; much truth in your remark,"

cried the colonel. "What say you, my lads, will you fight the Frenchmen and the Don, ay! and even my own rebellious and infatuated countrymen? Nay, by heaven, it is not a trifle that shall prevent his majesty from possessing the services of three such heroes. Here are five guineas a-piece for you the moment that you put foot on board the Alacrity cutter; and that can be easily done, as she lies at anchor this very night, only two short leagues to the south of this in a small port, where she is riding out the gale as snugly as if she were in the corner of this room."

One of the men affected a gaze at the money with longing eyes, while he asked as if weighing the terms of the engagement—

"Whether the Alacrity was called a good sea-boat, and was thought to give a comfortable berth to her crew?"

"Comfortable!" echoed Borroughcliffe; "for that matter, she is called the bravest cutter in the navy. You have seen much of the world, I dare say; did you ever see such a place as the marine arsenal at Carthagena, in old Spain?"

"Indeed I have, sir," returned the seaman, in a cool, collected tone.

"Ah! you have! well, did you ever meet with a house in Paris that they call the Tuileries? because it's a dog-kennel to the Alacrity."

"I have even fallen in with the place you mention, sir," returned the sailor; "and must own the berth quite good enough for such as I am if it tallies with your description."

"The duce take these blue-jackets," muttered Borroughcliffe, addressing himself unconsciously to Miss Plowden, near whom he happened to be at the time; "they run their tarry countenances into all the corners of the earth, and abridge a man most lamentably in his comparisons. Now who the devil would have thought that fellow had ever put his sea green eyes on the palace of king Louis?"

Katherine heeded not his speech, but sat eyeing the prisoners with a confused and wavering expression of countenance, while Colonel Howard renewed the discourse, by exclaiming—

"Come, come, Borroughcliffe, let us give the lads no tales for a recruit, but good, plain, honest English—God bless the language, and the land for which it was first made, too. There is no necessity to tell these men, if they are, what

they seem to be, practical seamen, that a cutter of ten guns contains all the room and accommodation of a palace."

"Do you allow nothing for English oak and English comfort, mine host," said the immovable captain; "do you think, good sir, that I measure fitness and propriety by square and compass, as if I were planning Solomon's temple anew! All I mean to say is, that the Alacrity is a vessel of singular compactness, and magical arrangement of room. Like the tent of that handsome brother of the fairy, in the Arabian Nights, she is big or she is little, as occasion needeth; and now, hang me, if I don't think I have uttered more in her favour than her commander would say to help me to recruit, though no lad in the three kingdoms should appear willing to try how a scarlet coat would suit his boorish figure."

"That time has not yet arrived, and God forbid that it ever should, while the monarch needs a soldier in the field to protect his rights. But what say ye, my men? you have heard the recommendation that Captain Borroughcliffe has given of the Alacrity, which is altogether true—after making some allowances for language. Will ye serve? shall I order you a cheering glass a man, and lay by the gold, till I hear

from the cutter that you are enrolled under the banners of the best of kings?"

Katherine Plowden, who hardly seemed to breathe, so close and intent was the interest with which she regarded the seamen, fancied she observed lurking smiles on their faces; but if her conjectures were true, their disposition to be merry went no farther, and the one who had spoken hitherto, replied in the same calm manner as before—

"You will excuse us if we decline shipping in the cutter sir; we are used to distant voyages and large vessels whereas the Alacrity is kept at coast duty, and is not of a size to lay herself alongside of a Don or a Frenchman with a double row of teeth."

"If you prefer that sort of sport, you must to the right-about for Yarmouth; there you will find ships that will meet any thing that swims," said the colonel.

"Perhaps the gentlemen would prefer abandoning the cares and dangers of the ocean for a life of ease and gaiety," said the captain. "The hand that has long dallied with a marlinspike may be easily made to feel a trigger, as gracefully as a lady touches the keys of her piano. In short,

there is and there is not a great resemblance between the life of a sailor, and that of a soldier. There are no gales, of wind, nor short allowances, nor reefing topsails, nor shipwrecks, among soldiers—and at the same time, there is just as much, or even more grog-drinking, jollifying, care-killing fun around a canteen and an open knapsack, than there is on the end of a mess-chest, with a full can and a Saturday night's breeze. I have crossed the ocean several times, and I must own that a ship, in good weather, is very much the same as a camp or comfortable barracks; mind, I say, only in very good weather."

"We have no doubt that all you say is true, sir," observed the spokesman of the three, "but what to you may seem a hardship, to us is pleasure. We have faced too many a gale to mind a capfull-of wind, and should think ourselves always in the calm latitudes, in one of your barracks, where there is nothing to do but to eat our grub, and to march a little fore and aft a small piece of green earth. We hardly know one end of a musket from the other."

"No!" said Borroughcliffe, musing; and then advancing with a quick step towards them, he cried, in a spirited manner—"attention! right, dress!"

The speaker, and the seaman next him, gazed at the captain in silent wonder; but the third individual of the party, who had drawn himself a little aside, as if willing to be unnoticed, or perhaps pondering on his condition, involuntarily started at this unexpected order, and erecting himself, threw his head to the right as promptly as if he had been on a parade ground.

"O ho! ye are apt scholars, gentlemen, and ye can learn, I see," continued Borroughcliffe. "I feel it to be proper that I detain these men till to-morrow morning, Colonel Howard, and yet I would give them better quarters than the hard benches of the guard-room."

"Act your pleasure, Captain Borroughcliffe," returned the host, "so you do but your duty to our royal master. They shall not want for cheer, and they can have a room over the servants' offices in the south side of the Abbey."

"Three rooms, my colonel, three rooms must be provided though I give up my own."

"There are several small empty apartments there, where blankets might be taken, and the men placed for safe keeping, if you deem it necessary; though, to me, they seem

like good loyal tars, whose greatest glory it would be to serve their prince, and whose principal pleasure would consist in getting alongside of a Don or a Monsieur."

"We shall discuss these matters anon," said Boroughcliffe, dryly. "I see Miss Plowden begins to look grave at our abusing her patience so long, and I know that cold coffee is, like whithered love, but a tasteless sort of beverage. Come, gentlemen, en avant! you have seen the Tuileries, and you must have read a little French. Mr. Christopher Dillon, know you where these three small apartments are 'situate, lying, and being,' as your parchments read?"

"I do, sir," said the complying lawyer, "and shall take much pleasure in guiding you to them. I think your decision that of a prudent and sagacious officer, and much doubt whether Durham castle, or some other fortress, will be thought too big to hold them, ere long."

As this speech was uttered while the men were passing from the room, its effect on them was unnoticed; but Katherine Plowden, who was left for a few moments by herself, sat and pondered over what she had seen and heard, with a thoughtfulness of manner that was not usual to her gay and buoyant spirits. The sounds of the retiring footsteps, however, gradually grew fainter, and the return

of her guardian alone recalled the recollection of the young lady to the duties of her situation.

While engaged in the little offices of the tea-table, Katherine threw many furtive glances at the veteran ; but, although he seemed to be musing, there was nothing austere, or suspicious in his frank, open countenance.

" There is much useless trouble taken with these wandering seamen, sir," said Katherine, at length ; " it seems to be the particular province of Mr. Christopher Dillon, to make all that come in contact with him excessively uncomfortable."

" And what has Kit to do with the detention of the men ?"

" What ! why, has he not undertaken to stand godfather to their prisons ?—by a woman's patience, I think, Colonel Howard, this business will gain a pretty addition to the names of St. Ruth. It is already called a house, an abbey, a place, and by some a castle ; let Mr. Dillon have his way for a month, and it will add jail to the number."

" Kit is not so happy as to possess the favour of Miss

Plowden; but still, Kit is a worthy fellow, and a good fellow, and a sensible fellow, ay! and what is of more value than all these put together, Miss Katherine, Mr. Christopher Dillon is a faithful and loyal subject to his prince. His mother was my cousin-german, madam, and, I cannot say how soon I may call him my nephew. The Dillons are of good Irish extraction, and I believe that even Miss Plowden will admit that the Howards have some pretensions to a name."

"Ah! it is those very things called names that I most allude to," said Katherine, quickly. "But an hour since you were indignant, my dear guardian, because you suspected that I insinuated you ought to write jailer behind the name of Howard, and even now you submit to have the office palmed upon you."

"You forget, Miss Katherine Plowden, that it is the pleasure of one of his majesty's officers to detain these men."

"But I thought that the glorious British constitution, which you so often mention," interrupted the young lady, spiritedly, "gives liberty to all who touch these blessed shores; you know, sir, that out of twenty blacks that you

brought with you, how few remain; the rest having fled on the wings of the spirit of British liberty!"

This was touching a festering sore in the colonel's feelings, and his provoking ward well knew the effects her observation was likely to produce. Her guardian did not break forth in a violent burst of rage, or furnish those manifestations of his ire that he was wont to do on less important subjects, but he arose, with all his dignity concentrated in a look, and, after making a violent effort to restrain his feelings within the bounds necessary to preserve the decorum of his exit, he ventured a reply.

"That the British constitution is glorious, madam, is most true. That this island is the sole refuge where liberty has been able to find a home, is also true. The tyranny and oppression of the congress, which are grinding down the colonies to the powder of desolation and poverty, are not worthy of the sacred name. Rebellion pollutes all that it touches, madam. Although it often commences under the sanction of holy liberty, it ever terminates in despotism. The annals of the world, from the time of the Greeks and Romans down to the present day, abundantly prove it. There was that Julius Cæsar—he was one on your people's men, and he ended a tyrant. Oliver Cromwell was another—a rebel, a demagogue, and a tyrant.

The gradations, madam, are as inevitable as from childhood to youth, and from youth to age. As for the little affair that you have been pleased to mention, of the—of the—of my private concerns, I can only say, that the affairs of nations are not to be judged of by domestic incidents, any more than domestic occurrences are to be judged of by national politics." The colonel, like many a better logician, mistook his antithesis for argument, and paused a moment to admire his own eloquence; but the current of his thoughts, which always flowed in torrents on this subject, swept him, along in its course, and he continued—"Yes, madam, here, and here alone is true liberty to be found. With this solemn asseveration, which is not lightly made, but which is the result of sixty year's experience, I leave you, Miss Plowden; let it be a subject of deep reflection with you, for I too well understand your treacherous feelings not to know that your political errors encourage your personal foibles; reflect, for your own sake, if you love not only your own happiness, but your respectability and standing in the world. As for the black hounds that you spoke of, they are a set of rebellious, mutinous, ungrateful rascals; and if ever I meet one of the damned—"

The colonel had so far controlled his feelings, as to leave the presence of the lady before he broke out into the bitter

invectives we have recorded, and Katherine stood a minute, pressing her forefinger on her lips, listening to his voice as it grumbled along the gallery, until the sounds were finally excluded by the closing of a distant door. The wilful girl then shook her dark locks, and a smile of arch mischief, blended with an expression of regret, in her countenance, as she spoke to herself, while with hurried hands she threw her tea-equipage aside in a confused pile—

"It was perhaps a cruel experiment, but it has succeeded. Though prisoners ourselves, we are at least left free for the remainder of this night. These mysterious sailors must be examined more closely. If the proud eye of Edward Griffith was not glaring under the black wig of one of them, I am no judge of features; and where has Master Barnstable concealed his charming visage! for neither of the others could be he. But now for Cecilia."

Her light form glided from the room, while she was yet speaking, and flitting along the dimly-lighted passages, it disappeared in one of those turnings that led to the more secret apartments of the abbey.

CHAPTER XIII.

"How! Lucia, would'st thou have me sink away
In pleasing dreams, and lose myself in love—"

Cato.

The reader must not imagine that the world stood still during the occurrence of the scenes we have related. By the time the three seamen were placed in as many different rooms, and a sentinel was stationed in the gallery common to them all, in such a manner as to keep an eye on his whole charge at once, the hour had run deep into the night. Captain Borroughcliffe obeyed a summons from the colonel, who made him an evasive apology for the change in their evening's amusement, and challenged his guest to a renewal of the attack on the Madeira. This was too grateful a theme to be lightly discussed by the Captain, and the abbey clock had given forth as many of its mournful remonstrances as the division of the hours would permit, before they separated. In the mean time, Mr. Dillon became invisible; though a

servant, when questioned by the host on the subject, announced, that "he believed Mr. Christopher had chosen to ride over to ——, to be in readiness to join the hunt, on the morning, with the dawn." While the gentlemen were thus indulging themselves in the dining parlour, and laughing over the tales of other times and hard campaigns, two very different scenes occurred in other parts of the building.

When the quiet of the abbey was only interrupted by the howling of the wind, or by the loud and prolonged laughs which echoed through the passages from the joyous pair, who were thus comfortably established by the side of the bottle, a door was gently opened on one of the galleries of the "cloisters," and Katherine Plowden issued from it, wrapped in a close mantle, and holding in her hand a chamber lamp, which threw its dim light faintly along the gloomy walls in front, leaving all behind her obscured in darkness. She was, however, soon followed by two other female figures, clad in the same manner, and provided with similar lights. When all were in the gallery, Katherine drew the door softly to, and proceeded in front to lead the way.

"Hist!" said the low, tremulous voice of Cecilia, "they are yet up in the other parts of the house; and if it be as

you suspect, our visit would betray them, and prove the means of their certain destruction."

"Is the laugh of Colonel Howard in his cups so singular and unknown to your ear, Cecilia, that you know it not?" said Katherine with a little spirit; "or do you forget that on such occasions he seldom leaves himself ears to hear, or eyes to see with. But follow me; it is as I suspect—it must be as I suspect; and unless we do something to rescue them, they are lost, without they have laid a deeper scheme than is apparent."

"It is a dangerous road ye both journey," added the placid tones of Alice Dunscombe; "but ye are young, and ye are credulous."

"If you disapprove our visit," said Cecilia, "it cannot be right, and we had better return."

"No, no, I have said nought to disapprove of your present errand. If God has put the lives of those in your custody whom ye have taught yourselves to look up to with love and reverence, such as woman is bound to yield to one man, he has done it to no idle purpose. Lead us to their doors, Katharine; let us relieve our doubts, at least."

The ardent girl did not wait for a second bidding, but she led them, with light and quick steps, along the gallery, until they reached its termination, where they descended to the basement floor by a flight of narrow steps, and carefully opening a small door, emerged into the open air. They now stood on a small plat of grass, which lay between the building and the ornamental garden, across which they moved rapidly, concealing their lights, and bending their shrinking forms before the shivering blasts that poured their fury upon them from the ocean. They soon reached a large but rough addition to the buildings that concealed its plain architecture behind the more laboured and highly finished parts of the edifice, into which they entered through a massive door that stood ajar, as if to admit them.

"Chloe has been true to my orders," whispered Katherine, as they passed out of the chilling air; "now, if all the servants are asleep, our chance to escape unnoticed amounts to certainty."

It became necessary to go through the servant's hall, which they effected unobserved, as it had but one occupant, an aged black man, who, being posted with his ear within two feet of a bell, in this attitude had committed himself to a deep sleep. Gliding through this hall, they entered

divers long and intricate passages, all of which seemed as familiar to Katherine as they were unknown to her companions, until they reached another flight of steps which they ascended. They were now near their gaol, and stopped to examine whether any or what difficulties were likely to be opposed to their further progress.

"Now, indeed our case seems hopeless," whispered Katherine, as they stood, concealed by the darkness, in one end of an extremely long, narrow passage; "here is the sentinel in the building, instead of being as I had supposed, under the windows; what is to be done now?"

"Let us return," said Cecilia, in the same manner; "my influence with my uncle is great, even though he seems unkind to us at times. In the morning I will use it to persuade him to free them, on receiving their promise to abandon all such attempts in future."

"In the morning it will be too late," returned Katherine; "I saw that demon, Kit Dillon, mount his horse, under the pretence of riding to the great hunt of to-morrow, but I know his malicious eye too well to be deceived in his errand. He is silent that he may be sure, and if to-morrow comes, and finds Griffith within these walls, he will be condemned to a scaffold."

"Say no more," said Alice Dunscombe, with singular emotion; "some lucky circumstance may aid us with this sentinel."

As she spoke, she advanced; they had not proceeded far before the stern voice of the soldier challenged the party.

"'Tis no time to hesitate," whispered Katherine; "we are the ladies of the abbey, looking to our domestic affairs," she continued, aloud, "and think it a little remarkable that we are to encounter armed men, while going through our own dwelling."

The soldier respectfully presented his musket, and replied—

"My orders are to guard the doors of these three rooms, ladies; we have prisoners in them, and as for anything else my duty will be to serve you all in my power."

"Prisoners!" exclaimed Katharine, in affected surprise; "does Captain Borroughcliffe make St. Ruth's Abbey a gaol! Of what offences are the poor men guilty?"

"I know not, my lady; but as they are sailors, I suppose they have run from his majesty's service.'

"This is singular, truly! and why are they not sent to the county prison?"

"This must be examined into," said Cecilia, dropping the mantle from before her face. "As mistress of this house, I claim a right to know whom its walls contain; you will oblige me by opening the doors, for I see you have the keys suspended from your belt."

The sentinel hesitated. He was greatly awed by the presence and beauty of the speakers, and a still voice reminded him of his duty. A lucky thought, however, interposed to relieve him from his dilemma, and at the same time to comply with the request, or, rather, order of the lady. As he handed her the keys, he said—

"Here they are, my lady; my orders are to keep the the prisoners in, not to keep any one out. When you are done with them, you will please to return them to me, if it be only to save a poor fellow's eyes, for, unless the door is kept locked, I shall not dare to look about me for a moment."

Cecilia promised to return the keys, and she had applied one of them to a lock with a trembling hand, when Alice Dunscombe arrested her arm, and addressed the soldier.

"Say you there are three? are they men in years?"

"No, my lady, all good, serviceable lads, who couldn't do better than to serve his majesty, or, as it may prove, worse than to run from their colours."

"But are their years and appearance similar? I ask, for I have a friend who has been guilty of some boyish tricks, and has tried the seas among other foolish hazards."

"There is no boy here. In the far room on the left is a smart, soldier-looking chap, of about thirty, who, the captain thinks, has carried a musket before now; on him I am charged to keep a particular eye. Next to him is as pretty a looking youth as eyes could wish to see, and it makes one feel mournful to think what he must come to, if he has really deserted his ship. In the room near you, is a smaller, quiet little body, who might make a better preacher than a sailor or a soldier either, he has such a gentle way with him."

Alice covered her eyes with her hand a moment, and then recovering herself, proceeded—

"Gentleness may do more with the unfortunate men than fear; hear is a guinea; withdraw to the far end of the passage, where you can watch them as well as here, while

we enter, and endeavour to make them confess who and what they really are."

The soldier took the money, and after looking about him in a little uncertainty, he at length complied, as it was obviously true they could only escape by passing him, near the flight of steps. When he was beyond hearing, Alice Dunscombe turned to her companions, and a slight glow appeared in feverish spots on her cheek, as she addressed them.

"It would be idle to attempt to hide from you, that I expect to meet the individual whose voice I must have heard in reality to-night, instead of only imaginary sounds, as I vainly, if not wickedly supposed. I have many reasons for changing my opinion, the chief of which is that he is leagued with the rebellious Americans, in this unnatural war. Nay, chide me not, Miss Plowden; you will remember that I found my being on this island. I come here on no vain or weak errand, Miss Howard, but to spare human blood." She paused, as if struggling to speak calmly. "But no one can witness the interview except our God."

"Go, then," said Katherine, secretly rejoicing at her determination, "while we inquire into the characters of the others."

Alice Dunscombe turned the key, and gently opening the door she desired her companions to tap for her, as they returned, and then instantly disappeared in the apartment.

Cecilia and her cousin proceeded to the next door, which they opened in silence, and entered cautiously into the room.

Katharine Plowden had so far examined into the arrangements of Colonel Howard, as to know that at the same time he had ordered blankets to be provided for the prisoners, he had not thought it necessary to administer any further to the accommodations of men who had apparently made their beds and pillows of planks for the greater part of their lives.

The ladies accordingly found the youthful sailor whom they sought, with his body rolled in the shaggy covering, extended at his length along the naked boards, and buried in a deep sleep. So timid were the steps of his visitors, and so noiseless was their entrance, that they approached even to his side, without disturbing his slumbers. The head of the prisoner lay rudely pillowed on a billet of wood, one hand protecting his face from its rough surface, and the other thrust into his bosom, where it rested, with a relaxed grasp, on the handle of a dirk. Although he slept,

nd that heavily, yet his rest was unnatural and perturbed. His breathing was hard and quick, and something like the ow, rapid murmurings of a confused utterance mingled with is respiration. The moment had now arrived when the haracter of Cecilia Howard appeared to undergo an entire hange. Hitherto she had been led by her cousin, whose ctivity and enterprise seemed to qualify her so well for the ffice of guide; but now she advanced before Katherine, nd, extending her lamp in such a manner as to throw the ght across the face of the sleeper, she bent to examine his ountenance, with keen and anxious eyes.

"Am I right?" whispered her cousin.

"May God, in his infinite compassion, pity and protect m?" murmured, Cecilia, her whole frame involuntarily uddering, as the conviction that she beheld Griffith ashed across her mind. "Yes, Katherine, it is he, and resumptuous madness has driven him here. But time resses; he must be awakened, and his escape effected at very hazard."

"Nay, then, delay no longer, but rouse him from his sleep."

"Griffith! Edward Griffith!" said the soft tones of Ce-lia, "Griffith, awake!"

"Your call is useless, for they sleep nightly among tempests and boisterous sounds," said Katherine; "but I have heard it said that the smallest touch will generally cause one of them to stir."

"Griffith!" repeated Cecilia, laying her fair hand timidly on his own.

The flash of the lightning is not more nimble than the leap that the young man made to his feet, which he no sooner gained, than his dirk gleamed in the light of the lamps, as he brandished it fiercely with one hand, while with the other he extended a pistol, in a menacing attitude, towards his disturbers.

"Stand back!" he exclaimed; "I am your prisoner only as a corpse!"

The fierceness of his front, and the glaring eye-balls, that rolled wildly around him, appalled Cecilia, who shrunk back in fear, dropping her mantle from her person, but still keeping her mild eyes fastened on his countenance with a confiding gaze, that contradicted her shrinking attitude, as she replied—

"Edward, it is I; Cecilia Howard, come to save you

from destruction; you are known even through your ingenious disguise."

The pistol and dirk fell together on the blanket of the young sailor, whose looks instantly lost their disturbed expression in a glow of pleasure.

"Fortune at length favours me!" he cried. "This is kind, Cecilia; more than I deserve, and much more than I expected. But you are not alone,"

"'Tis my cousin Kate; to her piercing eyes you owe your detection, and she has kindly consented to accompany me, that we might urge you to—nay, that we might, if necessary, assist you to fly. For 'tis cruel folly, Griffith, thus to tempt your fate."

"Have I tempted it, then, in vain! Miss Powden, to you I must appeal for an answer and a justification."

Katherine looked displeased, but after a moment's hesitation she replied—

"Your servant, Mr. Griffith; I perceive that the erudite Captain Barnstable has not only succeeded in spelling

through my scrawl, but he has also given it to all hands for perusal."

"Now you do both him and me injustice," said Griffith, "it surely was not treachery to shew me a plan in which I was to be a principal actor."

"Ah! doubtless your excuses are as obedient to your calls, as your men," returned the young lady; "but how comes it that the hero of the Ariel sends a deputy to perform a duty that is so peculiarly his own? is he wont to be second in rescues?"

"Heaven forbid that you should think so meanly of him, for a moment! We owe you much, Miss Plowden, but we may have other duties. You know that we serve our common country, and have a superior with us, whose beck is our law."

"Return, then, Mr. Griffith, while you may, to the service of our bleeding country," said Cecilia, "and after the joint efforts of her brave children have expelled the intruders from her soil, let us hope there shall come a time when Katherine and myself may be restored to our native homes."

"Think you Miss Howard, to how long a period the mighty arm of the British king may extend that time? We shall prevail; a nation fighting for its dearest rights must ever prevail; but 'tis not the work of a day, for a people, poor scattered, and impoverished as we have been, to beat down a power like that of England; surely you forget that in bidding me to leave you with such expectations, Miss Howard, you doom me to an almost hopeless banishment!"

"We must trust to the will of God," said Cecilia; "if he ordain that America is to be free only after protracted sufferings, I can aid her but with my prayers; but you have an arm and an experience, Griffith, that might do her better service; waste not your usefulness, then, in visionary schemes for private happiness, but seize the moments as they offer, and return to your ship, if indeed it is yet in safety, and endeavour to forget this mad undertaking, and for a time, the being who has led you to the adventure."

"This is a reception that I had not anticipated," returned Griffith; "for though accident, and not intention, has thrown me into your presence this evening, I did hope that when I again saw the frigate, it would be in your company, Cecilia.

"You cannot justly reproach me, Mr. Griffith, with your

disappointment, for I have not uttered or authorized a syllable that could induce you or any one to believe that I would consent to quit my uncle."

"Miss Howard would not think me presumptous, if I remind her that there was a time when she did not think me unworthy to be intrusted with her person and happiness."

A rich bloom mantled on the face of Cecilia as she replied—

"Nor do I now, Mr. Griffith; but you do well to remind me of my former weakness for the recollection of its folly, and imprudence only adds to my present strength."

"Nay," interrupted her eager lover, "if I intended a reproach, or harboured a boastful thought, spurn me from you for ever, as unworthy of your favour."

"I acquit you of both much easier than I can acquit myself of the charge of weakness and folly," continued Cecilia; "but there are many things that have occurred, since we last met, to prevent a repetition of such inconsiderate rashness on my part. One of them is," she added, smiling sweetly, "that I have numbered twelve additional months to my age.

and a hundred to my experience. Another, and perhaps a more important one, is, that my uncle then continued among the friends of his youth, surrounded by those whose blood mingles with his own; but here lives a stranger, and, though he finds some consolation in dwelling in a building where his ancestors have dwelt before him, yet he walks as an alien through its gloomy passages, and would find the empty honour but a miserable compensation for the kindness and affection of one whom he has loved and cherished from her infancy."

"And yet he is opposed to you in your private wishes, Cecilia, unless my besotted vanity has led me to believe what would now be madness to learn was false; and in your opinions of public things, you are quite as widely separated. I should think there could be but little happiness dependant on a connexion where there is no one feeling entertained in common."

"There is an all-important one," said Miss Howard, "'tis our love. He is my kind, my affectionate, and, unless thwarted by some evil cause, my indulgent uncle and guardian—and I am his brother Harry's child. This tie is not easily to be severed, Mr. Griffith, though, as I do not wish to see you crazed, I shall not add that your besotted

vanity has played you false; but, surely Edward, it is possible to feel double ties, and so to act as to discharge our duties to both. I never, never can, or will consent to desert my uncle, a stranger as he is in the land whose rule he upholds so blindly. You know not this England, Griffith; she receives her children from the colonies with cold and haughty distrust, like a jealous step-mother, who is wary of the favours that she bestows on her fictitious offspring."

"I know her in peace, and I know her in war," said the young sailor, proudly, "and can add, that she is a haughty friend, and a stubborn foe; but she grapples now with those who ask no more of her than an open sea, and an enemy's favours. But this determination will be melancholy tidings for me to convey to Barnstable."

"Nay," said Cecila, smiling, "I cannot vouch for others, who have no uncles, and who have an extra quantity of ill-humour and spleen against this country, its people, and its laws, although profoundly ignorant of them all."

"Is Miss Howard tired of seeing me under the tiles of St. Ruth?" asked Katherine. "But hark! are there not footsteps approaching along the gallery?"

They listened, in breathless silence, and soon heard

distinctly the approaching tread of more than one person. Voices were quite audible, and before they had time to consult on what was best to be done, the words of the speakers were distinctly heard at the door of their own apartment.

"Ay! he has a military air about him, Peters, that will make him a prize; come, open the door."

"This is not his room, your honour," said the alarmed soldier; "he quarters in the last room in the gallery."

"How know you that, fellow? come, produce the key, and open the way for me; I care not who sleeps here; there is no saying but I may enlist them all three."

A single moment of dreadful incertitude succeeded, when the sentinel was heard saying, in reply to this peremptory order—

"I thought your honour wanted to see the one with the black stock, and so left the rest of the keys at the other end of the passage; but—"

"But nothing, you loon; a sentinel should always carry

his keys about him, like a jailer; follow, then, and let me see the lad who dresses so well to the right."

As the heart of Katherine began to beat less vehemently, she said—

"'Tis Borroughcliffe, and too drunk to see that we have left the key in the door; but what is to be done? we have but a moment for consultation."

"As the day dawns," said Cecilia, quickly, "I shall send here, under the pretence of conveying you food, my own woman—"

"There is no need of risking anything for my safety," interrupted Griffith: "I hardly think we shall be detained, and if we are, Barnstable is at hand with a force that would scatter these recruits to the four winds of heaven."

"Ah! that would lead to bloodshed, and scenes of horror!" exclaimed Cecilia."

"Listen!" cried Katherine, "they approach again!"

A man now stopped, once more, at their door, which

was opened softly, and the face of the sentinel was thrust into the apartment.

"Captain Borroughcliffe is on his rounds, and for fifty of your guineas I would not have you here another minute."

"But one word more," said Cecilia.

"Not a syllable, my lady, for my life," returned the man; "the lady from the next room waits for you, and in mercy to a poor fellow, go back where you came from."

The appeal was unanswerable, and they complied, Cecilia saying, as they left the room—

"I shall send you food in the morning, young man, and directions how to take the remedy necessary to your safety."

In the passage they found Alice Dunscombe, with her face concealed in her mantle, and, it would seem, by the heavy sighs that escaped from her, deeply agitated by the interview which she had just encountered.

But as the reader may have some curiosity to know what

occurred to distress this unoffending lady so sensibly, we shall detain the narrative, to relate the substance of that which passed between her and the individual whom she visited, in the next volume.

END OF VOL. I.

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